

HOLIDAY BOWL PREVIEW



THE ORIGINAL MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO NEBRASKA ATHLETICS

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TAKING CENTER STAGE

HUSKERS HEADED TO SAN DIEGO

PLUS
SUH WINS 4 MAJOR AWARDS

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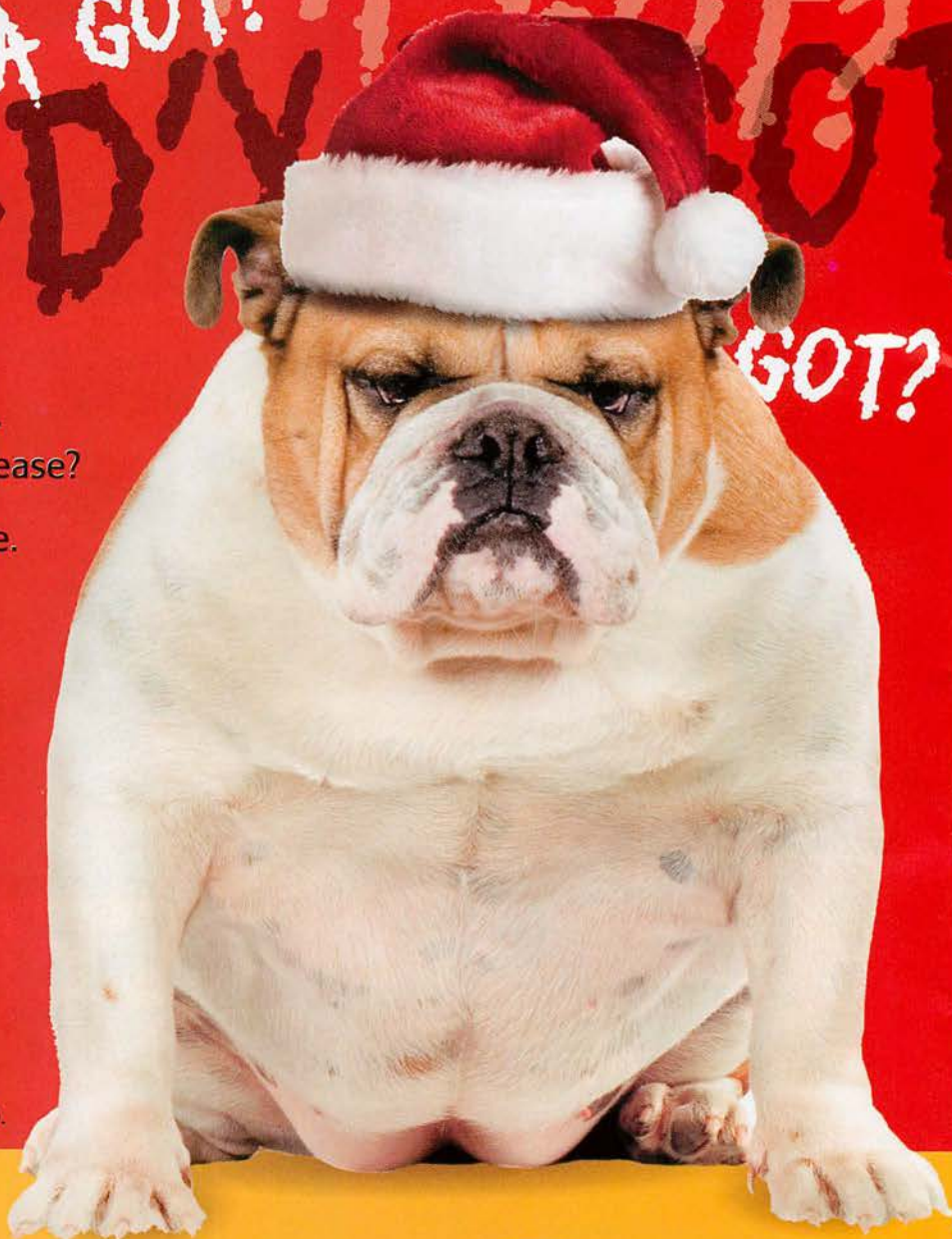
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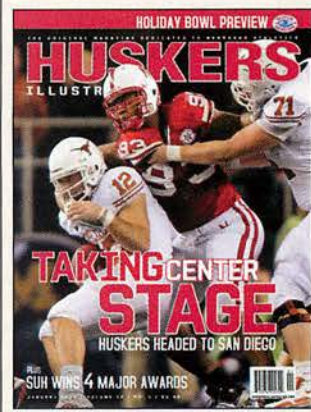
HUSKERS

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ON THE COVER

Senior defensive tackle Ndamukong Suh took center stage in the Big 12 Championship and the postseason awards circuit, sweeping the defensive major awards and finishing fourth in the Heisman trophy voting.

Photo by Aaron Babcock



CENTER STAGE

Cornhuskers closing decade on a high note



WHAT A WILD way to close out a decade.

This issue marks the first edition of the 30th year of publication for Huskers Illustrated, hence the label, Volume 30, Issue 1. This issue hits newsstands at what could be the most uplifting point of the decade for the Cornhuskers.

While it was a week of painful losses, it has also been a stretch that has seen the Huskers climb back in the spotlight of the national media.

The firestorm started leading up to the Big 12 Championship game – a game where nobody gave Nebraska a chance to win. But Nebraska's defense nearly smeared the entire BCS Championship picture, coming :01 second short of sending Texas Christian, rather than the Longhorns, to the national title game.

While the loss will go down as one of the most painful in recent memory, the sting was eased a bit with the announcement that senior defensive tackle Ndamukong Suh would be traveling to New York City to participate in the Heisman Trophy ceremony.

While Suh would ultimately finish

fourth, unable to overcome voters' bias against defensive players, his path to the ceremony was not a quiet one. His name scrolled across the ESPN ticker the entire week as he racked up major awards like sacks against the Longhorns.

He started his week in Charlotte by winning the Bronko Nagurski Award on Monday. Wednesday night he landed the Lombardi Award in Houston. Thursday his fame grew as he landed two more awards in front of a national audience in Orlando, staking his claim to Bednarik Award and the Outland Trophy. And while he didn't come away with college football's ultimate individual prize in New York City on Saturday, he dominated the coverage.

Because of Suh taking center stage all week, Nebraska was again a household name. It's impossible to know where Nebraska is headed this decade, but playing in a conference championship and making a serious run at the Heisman Trophy is a great place to start. **N**

Send me your comments or story ideas to aaron@huskersillustrated.com.

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PHOTO BY AARON BABCOCK

TURN BACK THE CLOCK

When **ADI KUNALIC**'s kickoff went out of bounds (something that rarely, if ever, happens) at the Texas 9-yard line with 1:44 to play, after **ALEX HENERY**'s fourth field goal had given Nebraska a 12-10 lead in the Big 12 Championship game at Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas, older Cornhusker fans might have sensed they'd already seen the scenario that was about to unfold.

That sense of foreboding was probably re-enforced when **LARRY ASANTE** drew a 15-yard penalty for a horse-collar tackle of **JORDAN SHIPLEY**, moving the ball to the Nebraska 26-yard line.

Three plays later (two of them for lost yardage, the third a **COLT MCCOY** pass that sailed out of bounds), after the Cornhuskers had run onto the field to

celebrate and officials had put 1 second back on the clock, the Longhorns'

HUNTER LAWRENCE kicked a 46-yard field goal.

Texas 13, Nebraska 12.

Turn back the clock to the 1994 Orange Bowl game . . .

With 1:16 remaining, **BYRON BENNETT** kicked a 27-yard field goal to give Nebraska a 16-15 lead against heavily favored Florida State. The kick capped a nine-play, 71-yard drive.

Bennett then kicked off, and the ball went out of bounds at the Seminoles' 16-yard line.

So Florida State started at its own 35-yard line and drove to the Nebraska 3-yard line, aided by 15-yard penalties for a personal foul and, one down later, pass

interference.

On second-and-goal at the 5-yard line, the Seminoles' **SCOTT BENTLEY** kicked his fourth field goal of the game, a 22-yarder, to give Florida State an 18-16 lead with 21 seconds remaining.

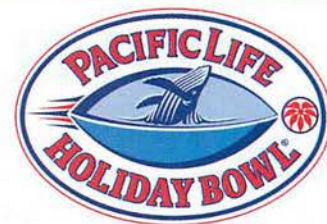
Florida State coach **BOBBY BOWDEN** had used his final timeout with 24 seconds on the clock, after **TOBY WRIGHT** and **KEVIN RAMAEKERS** had tackled **SEAN JACKSON** for a 2-yard loss.

The Cornhuskers weren't finished, however. **BARRON MILES** returned the kickoff 23 yards to the Nebraska 43-yard line, and after an incomplete pass, **TOMMIE FRAZIER** teamed with tight end **TRUMANE BELL** on a pass play that gained 29 yards to the Florida State 28-yard line.

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PHOTO BY AARON BABCOCK



HOT TICKET

Less than two days after the Holiday Bowl announced its match-up of Nebraska and Arizona, Nebraska's allotment of 11,000 tickets was sold. Donors purchased the first 7,000 tickets.

At that point, tickets remained through the bowl's Website (www.pacificlifelifeholidaybowl.com) as well as from Arizona's allotment – which had not been exhausted.

The Nebraska-Arizona Holiday Bowl game in 1998 drew the second-largest attendance in the bowl's 31-game history (65,354). Based on television ratings, it was the most watched Holiday Bowl.

FOR THE LAST TIME

Thirteen seniors, eight of them in their fifth (or in **ANDY CHRISTENSEN**'s case sixth) year and four of them former walk-ons, will be playing their final game at Nebraska in the Holiday Bowl.

"They went through a lot. They have obviously been through a coaching change and they've persevered," coach **BO PELINI** said. "I think they have represented this program well.

"They all kind of have their own story."

ALL-AMERICA

NDAMUKONG SUH and Alabama running back **MARK INGRAM** headlined the 2009 American Football Coaches' All-America team, the first major All-America team to be announced.

The AFCA has selected an All-America team since 1945. Nebraska ranks sixth all-time, having been represented on the team 49 times by 44 players. Oklahoma tops the list (60/52), followed by Ohio State (56/42), Notre Dame (56/49), Michigan (54/48) and Southern California (54/47).

Nebraska placed at least one player on the team every season from 1977 to 1989.

The Seminoles began celebrating the program's first national championship, confident time had run out. They dumped Gatorade on Bowden. And they ran onto the field.

But the officials conferred and put 1 second back on the clock – yep, 1 second.

So Bennett came on to attempt a 45-yard field goal.

The ball sailed wide left.

Florida State 18, Nebraska 16.

A.P. ALL-BIG 12

Nebraska was represented on the conference coaches' All-Big 12 first team

by four players (see In the Red Zone). The Associated Press All-Big 12 first team included only one Cornhusker, defensive tackle **NDAMUKONG SUH**, who also was the AP Defensive Player of the Year.

Second-team selections: center **JACOB HICKMAN**, tight end **MIKE MCNEILL**, kicker **ALEX HENERY**, defensive tackle **JARED CRICK**, linebacker **PHILLIP DILLARD** and defensive back **PRINCE AMUKAMARA**.

Honorable mention: offensive guard **RICKY HENRY**, running back **ROY HELU, JR.**, all-purpose **NILES PAUL**, defensive backs **LARRY ASANTE** and **MATT O'HANLON** and punter **ALEX HENERY**.

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BEST BLACKSHIRT EVER?

Whether **NDAMUKONG SUH** is the best defensive player in Nebraska football history can be debated, with **GRANT WISTROM** and **RICH GLOVER** figuring prominently in the debate.

That Suh is the most decorated defensive player in Cornhusker history can't be debated, however.

In the week following the Big 12 Championship game, Suh was named the winner of the Outland Trophy, the Lombardi Award, the Bednarik Award and the Nagurski Award.

Even though the results of voting for the Heisman Trophy and Lott Trophy – Suh was a finalist for both – had yet to be announced, he had already collected more national awards than any Nebraska defender in a single season. Glover won the Outland Trophy and Lombardi Award in 1972, while Wistrom won the Lombardi Award in 1997. Both were two-time All-Americans.

Suh became the eighth Husker to earn the Outland Trophy, the third oldest of the major collegiate awards – established in 1946. The Heisman Trophy and Maxwell Award are older.



PHOTO BY RON J. DESHAIES/TREASURED EVENTS OF CHARLOTTE

The Outland Trophy is selected by the Football Writers Association of America. Former Nebraska center **DAVE RIMINGTON** is the only player to win the trophy twice (1981-82).

Suh joins Rimington (1982) and offensive guard **DEAN STEINKUHLER** (1983) as the only Cornhuskers to win the Outland Trophy and Lombardi Award in the same season.

SIDELINES

HEISMAN TROPHY

Johnny Rodgers, WB (1972)
Mike Rozier, IB (1983)
Eric Crouch, QB (2001)

[Heisman Top 10, non-winner]

Sam Francis, FB (1936) 2nd
Bobby Reynolds, HB (1950) 5th
Wayne Meylan, MG (1967) 9th
Jerry Tagge, QB (1971) 7th
Rich Glover, MG (1972) 3rd
Dave Humm, QB (1974) 5th
Jarvis Redwine, IB (1980) 8th
Dave Rimington, C (1982) 5th
Mike Rozier, IB (1982) 10th
Turner Gill, QB (1983) 4th
Lawrence Phillips, IB (1994) 8th
Zach Wiegert, OT (1994) 9th
Tommie Frazier, QB (1995) 2nd
Ndamukong Suh, DT (2009) 4th

LOMBARDI AWARD

Rich Glover, MG (1972)
Dave Rimington, C (1982)
Dean Steinkuhler, OG (1983)
Grant Wistrom, RE (1997)
Ndamukong Suh, DT (2009)

[Lombardi Finalists, non-winner]

Rich Glover, MG (1971)
Larry Jacobson, DT (1971)
Broderick Thomas, DE (1988)
Zach Wiegert, OT (1994)
Dominic Raiola, C (2000)

OUTLAND TROPHY

Larry Jacobson, DT (1971)
Rich Glover, MG (1972)
Dave Rimington, C (1981)
Dave Rimington, C (1982)
Dean Steinkuhler, OG (1983)
Will Shields, OG (1992)
Zach Wiegert, OT (1994)
Aaron Taylor, OG (1997)
Ndamukong Suh, DT (2009)

[Outland Finalists, non-winner]

Jason Peter, DT (1997)
Dominic Raiola, C (2000)
Toniu Fonoti, OG (2001)

CHUCK BEDNARIK AWARD

Ndamukong Suh (2009)

BRONKO NAGURSKI TROPHY

Ndamukong Suh (2009)

*RONNIE LOTT TROPHY

[Finalist]
Ndamukong Suh (2009)
*Awarded Dec. 13 (prior to print)

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Asante "emotional" after All-Big 12 honor

LARRY ASANTE was in an economics class when he got the text message from media relations director **KEITH MANN**, notifying him he was on the Big 12 coaches' all-conference first team.

"It was very emotional," Asante said. "It's been a long time coming."

The senior from Alexandria, Va., is in his third season as a starting safety after transferring from Coffeyville, Kan., Community College. He earned all-conference honorable mention in each of the previous two seasons. And he has been among Nebraska's leading tacklers in all three.

The emotion was based on his first season, when Nebraska's defense struggled and shouldered the burden of a 5-7 record – and the subsequent firing of coach **BILL CALLAHAN** and staff.

No player took the losing any harder than Asante.

"It was kind of rough when I first got here, going through that season, and for me to be where I'm at right now, I just praise the Lord for bringing this coaching staff and for bringing my teammates, and for them helping me become the player I was able to transform myself into," he said.

He was among four Cornhuskers included on the first-team defense. The others were senior tackle **NDAMUKONG SUH**, the Big 12 Defensive Player of the Year as well as the Big 12 Defensive Lineman of the Year; sophomore tackle **JARED CRICK**; and junior cornerback **PRINCE AMUKAMARA**.

"Coach is always talking about here at Nebraska we play team defense, and I'm not surprised the other guys made it (first team), too," said Asante.

Senior linebacker **PHILLIP DILLARD** was a second-team selection, as were junior running back **ROY HELU, JR.**, and junior place-kicker **ALEX HENERY**.

Eight Cornhuskers received honorable mention: junior Dejon Gomes (DB and Defensive Newcomer of the Year), junior Eric Hagg (DB), Henery (P), senior Jacob Hickman (OL), junior Mike McNeill (TE), senior Matt O'Hanlon (DB), junior Niles Paul (WR) and senior Barry Turner (DL).

Suh and Texas quarterback Colt McCoy were the only unanimous first-team picks.



2009 Coaches All-Big 12 Team

OFFENSE

QB	Colt McCoy, Texas, Sr.
RB	Daniel Thomas, Kansas State, Jr.
RB	Keith Toston, Oklahoma State, Sr.
FB	Bryant Ward, Oklahoma State, Jr.
WR	Jordan Shipley, Texas, Sr.
WR	Danario Alexander, Missouri, Sr.
WR	Dezmon Briscoe, Kansas, Jr.
TE	Jeron Mastrud, Kansas State, Sr.
OL	*Russell Okung, Oklahoma State, Sr.
OL	*Trent Williams, Oklahoma, Sr.
OL	Nick Stringer, Kansas State, Sr.
OL	Brandon Carter, Texas Tech, Sr.
OL	Nate Solder, Colorado, Jr.
PK	Grant Ressel, Missouri, So.
KR/PR	Brandon Banks, Kansas State, Sr.

DEFENSE

DL	NDAMUKONG SUH, NEBRASKA, SR.
DL	*Gerald McCoy, Oklahoma, Jr.
DL	Von Miller, Texas A&M, Jr.
DL	Brandon Sharpe, Texas Tech, Sr.
DL	JARED CRICK, NEBRASKA, SO.
LB	*Sean Weatherspoon, Missouri, Sr.
LB	Jesse Smith, Iowa State, Sr.
LB	Travis Lewis, Oklahoma, So.
DB	Earl Thomas, Texas, So.
DB	Perrish Cox, Oklahoma State, Sr.
DB	Dominique Franks, Oklahoma, Jr.
DB	PRINCE AMUKAMARA, NEBRASKA, JR.
DB	LARRY ASANTE, NEBRASKA, SR.
P	Derek Epperson, Baylor, Jr.

*Repeat first-team selections

COACH OF THE YEAR – Mack Brown, Texas

OFFENSIVE PLAYER – Colt McCoy

DEFENSIVE PLAYER – **SUH**

SPECIAL TEAMS PLAYER – Banks

OFFENSIVE FRESHMAN – Christine Michael, Texas A&M, RB

DEFENSIVE FRESHMAN – Aldon Smith, Missouri, DL

OFFENSIVE NEWCOMER – Thomas

DEFENSIVE NEWCOMER – David Sims, Iowa State, DB (Jr.)

OFFENSIVE LINEMAN – Okung

DEFENSIVE LINEMAN – **SUH**

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HERE AND NOW

Last season, Nebraska tied for the North Division title. So winning it outright represents tangible progress. Before the Cornhuskers played Texas, **BO PELINI** was asked if he expected his second team to be in such a position. "I was disappointed last year when we weren't in that position," he said.

"I don't think about it long term. I really don't. I just believe this: I believe in my heart that if we do what we need to do on a daily basis, it puts you in position to have these opportunities."

Winning the Big 12 North was not necessarily a focus.

"I've always believed that those things will happen and come as you earn them," said Pelini. "I choose to focus on the day-to-day process that's going to get us to that position."

NO COMPARISON

The Cornhuskers could finish with a better record than a year ago with a victory against Arizona. With a loss, the record would be worse. However, the final record won't necessarily show the progress the program has made in **BO PELINI's** second season as head coach.

And besides, beyond records, comparing this year's team with last year's is difficult.

"It's a different dynamic, I guess. You had to win different ways. We had different personnel," Pelini said late in the season. "The experience aspect of it was tilted the other way, more toward the offensive side than the defensive side. It's one of the things you have to do. You have to figure out a way to win and how to play to your strengths. I think we have done that for the most part."

SIDELINES



IT'S ACADEMIC

Sophomore defensive back

AUSTIN CASSIDY (pictured) and redshirted freshman linebacker

SEAN FISHER were among 22 Cornhusker football players to earn Academic All-Big 12 recognition.

Cassidy and Fisher had perfect 4.0 grade-point averages in the previous two semesters. Only one other Big 12 student-athlete nominated for the team had a 4.0 GPA.

Cassidy is a psychology major.

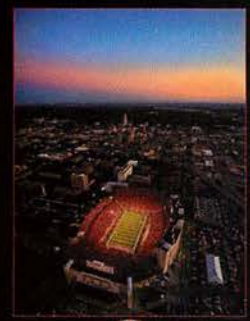
Fisher has not yet declared a major.

Thirteen other Cornhuskers earned first-team honors: Justin Blatchford, Wes Cammack, Andy Christensen, Will Compton, Ben Cotton, Thomas Grove, Ryan Hill, Marcel Jones, Colton Koehler, Adi Kunalic, Zac Lee, Jay Martin and Matt O'Hanlon.

Second-team honorees were:

Jacob Hickman, Tyler Legate, Brett Maher, Mathew May, Graham Stoddard, Ndamukong Suh and Lance Thorell.

Nebraska's 22 honorees were second to Texas, which had 23.

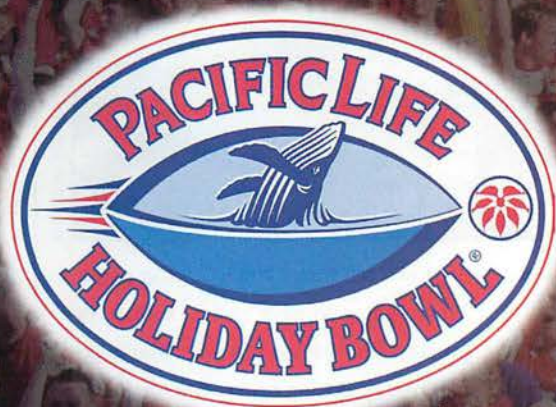


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WORK ETHIC

Late in the season, **NDAMUKONG SUH** was asked what his senior class would leave behind. "I think probably the easiest thing would be the work ethic," he said. "You've got to kind of see how things are done and understand how things are gone about, and it's easy to more or less kind of mirror-image it and then add another level, add your own twist to it to improve it. I think that's what we've done as a senior class from the previous guys, especially last year. We've understood the work ethic and things we had to get done. We've put our own little twist on it, our own little flavor."

DO THE RIGHT THING

Senior center **JACOB HICKMAN** has been a leader not only of the offensive line but also of the team this season, along with **NDAMUKONG SUH**. "We kind of just wanted to really lead by example and do the right things. There were some times where we did in the summer...we had to go out there and say, 'That's not good enough,' and stuff like that. But for the most part, we really just kind of figured the best way for the two of us to do it was just go out there and do what we know how to do."

What he and Suh knew was to "work hard and show guys what you're supposed to do," he said.

SOUND ADVICE

NDAMUKONG SUH'S Cornhusker career is winding down. Two more games and he'll be moving on to the NFL. Sophomore **JARED CRICK** appears to be the next in line for all of the attention.

Suh has been quick to praise Crick when asked. "On a day-to-day basis, he comes in and works," Suh said. "He, more or less, is kind of the guy who wants to do the dirty work and not really be in the limelight,



PHOTO BY SCOTT BRUHN

which I don't blame him because I don't like being in the limelight either.

"But if you play well, obviously you're going to get the attention, and that's something, obviously, we've talked about and he's getting used to and something he's embracing.

"I just tell him, 'You're a great player. You're going to have to deal with it, especially after I leave this year. You're going to keep getting better. You have great coaches. You're going to keep evolving into a great player, so just learn to embrace it and move forward with it.'"

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KEARNEY, NE



Ask **BRETT MAHER** what he considers to be his hometown and he's likely to hesitate before responding. "That's a tough question," the redshirted freshman said.

"I don't know if I can really answer that question."

Maher lists Kearney as his hometown because he lived there his senior year in high school. His father, Dr. Brian Maher, is superintendent of schools in Kearney. But Brett lived in Utica, Neb., before that and attended fourth grade through his junior year in high school there.

For that matter, he was born in Fremont, Neb., and lived in Elkhorn, Neb., and Waverly, Neb., before his family moved to Utica. So he's a Nebraskan, no hesitancy about that.

It's just choosing between Kearney and Utica. "A lot of my memories are from Utica, but I graduated from Kearney, and I have a lot of great friends in both places," he said.

Maher won't hesitate when asked why he walked on at Nebraska. He had offers from Ohio and Colorado State, and "I really liked both of those places," he said.

"But growing up a Nebraska kid, I'm just living my dream right now."

Maher is the top back-up to punter Alex Henery and the No. 1 holder for placements. And like Henery, he's very athletic. In addition to punting and place-kicking, he played wide receiver, quarterback and defensive back during his high school career. He also earned all-state honorable mention in basketball and led Kearney High to a Class A state championship in track and field, winning a gold medal in the long jump and clearing a meet-record 16-2 to win the pole vault.

Kearney "seemed like a big town, moving from Utica," Maher said. "But it's a great town. There is still a lot of stuff to do, but yet, at the same time, it still kind of has that small town feel to it."

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County: Buffalo (county seat)
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Distance from Lincoln: 125 miles

NU FOOTBALL LETTERMEN

Monte Christo, QB (1996-97-98)
Ron Griesse, G (1963-64)
Tom Heller, DB (1968)
Steve Markus, LB (1977)
Leslie Mills, G (1904)
Harold Peaker, QB (1927-28-29)
Brodie Proctor, HB (1915)
Del Wiegand, QB (1947-48)

DID YOU KNOW?

► If you're traveling on Highway 34 west of Lincoln, you might consider stopping to eat at the Bullet Hole in Utica, Maher's other hometown. "It's one of the best meals you can find," he said. "I always just get a burger and waffle fries. You can't go wrong with that."

► Kyle Larson, Nebraska's All-America punter in 2003, was a graduate of Kearney High. He was born in Kearney and called nearby Funk, Neb., home.

► Kearney got its name from Fort Kearny, which was named for Colonel Stephen Watts Kearny. The fort was built in 1848 to protect those heading west on the Oregon Trail.

► The second "e" in the name Kearney was a result of a spelling error at the Kearney Junction post office. "Junction" was dropped when the town was incorporated in 1873.

SIDELINES

HALL OF FAMER

Former Cornhusker **GRANT**

WISTROM (1994-97) was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame at the National Football Foundation's annual awards dinner in the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City on early December. Wistrom, a two-time unanimous All-America defensive end and the 1997 Lombardi Award winner, is the 14th Cornhusker to be inducted into the Hall of Fame.

Being selected is "a very humbling experience," Wistrom said. "When the ballot first came out, my wife looked at it and said, 'Do you think this is a possibility?' And I said, 'Baby, no.'"

FEARLESS AND FUN-LOVING

Freshman linebacker **ERIC**

MARTIN, who has made a significant contribution on special teams this season, is fearless; ask **JUSTIN BLATCHFORD**. "He's a great competitor," Blatchford said. "It doesn't matter who it is. He'll go up and hit them in the mouth. It's just great to see from a freshman, true freshman."

Martin also is "real easy to talk to, and he'll do anything to make anybody laugh," said Blatchford. "It comes at different times, so it's kind of unexpected."

For example?

"He'll just go around and tap you on the butt and kind of run away and act like nothing happened. It's really funny to see," Blatchford said.



STATE OF THE HUSKERS

BY CURT MCKEEVER

Big 12 likely not worried about "home edge"

THE MEDIA NOTES provided by the Big 12 Conference for last week's football championship claimed the distance from Lincoln to Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas, is 646 miles.

Undoubtedly, for a lot of other Nebraska fans it's even farther. Of course, it's been long proven that distance isn't much of a deterrent for most who have to travel to watch the Huskers.

But if league commissioner Dan Beebe and his board of directors decide what's best for the Big 12 is to make Cowboys Stadium the permanent site of the league's football championship, maybe as a gesture of appreciation they can set up some sort of fund that allows fans of the North Division representative to defray some costs.

Let's say your base is 500 or more miles away – as is every school in the North – you get a check for the cost of a couple tanks of gas (from Big 12 sponsor Phillips 66).

If you're less than 250 away – like five of the South schools are – you get a coupon for a hotdog and Coke to use during the game. (And if you're from anywhere near 350-miles-away, Lubbock, Texas, you get a tank of gas and a CD of Mac Davis singing "Texas In My Rear View Mirror" to get you through the long drive across the plains.)

Only half-kidding about those ideas, too, because after seeing Nebraska and Texas play in Jerry Jones' palatial stadium, it wouldn't surprise me if major negotiations are in the works to keep the game there beyond next season.

Though unfair to some schools (Colorado, Iowa State and Nebraska

are the farthest away), and also lending credence to the perception that the Big 12 has a South Division slant, it's hard to fight the comforts of luxury.

Look at Omaha's relationship with the NCAA and the College World Series. When the NCAA decided Rosenblatt Stadium wasn't good enough, the city opted to build a new one to keep the event.

Texas Stadium, which played host to the 2001 Big 12 championship (when Colorado beat Texas), suffered the same fate.

With Cowboys Stadium, teams and fans are guaranteed comfort, and not just because of the retractable roof. There are carpeted hallways and sparkling bits of blue granite in the black tiles throughout the building. Padded leather seats in sections other than suites. A few thousand high-definition televisions (with plans to add 2,000 more before the 2011 Super Bowl). Oh, and that can't-stop-watching 160-by-72-foot video board hanging from the roof.

Beebe believes locking the game permanently into Jones' palace creates an opportunity to build a fan base that will attend every year regardless of who's playing. He also likes Dallas' accessibility from whatever part of the conference fans happen to live.

During last summer's Big 12 media sessions in Dallas, Beebe said he sees pluses and minuses to the game being permanently in Cowboys Stadium. But he never brought up any minuses.

That's another reason the idea of having the game be a fixture there is being given serious consideration.

As for arguments that it gives the South Division team more of a home-field advantage, consider this fact: Eight of the first 14 Big 12 championships have been won by the team that had the farthest distance to travel.

Or take the Big 12 baseball championships if you need more proof. Eleven of those 13 events have been held in Oklahoma City, and only one time has Oklahoma or Oklahoma State earned the title. In fact, Nebraska has won more there (4) than any other school.

With football, though, the Big 12 has to consider the kind of exposure its biggest event generates, and early numbers from last week's game will be hard to ignore.

For the Nebraska-Texas game, ABC averaged a 3.5 overnight rating and 10 share among viewers 18-49 (first among all networks). That was up 25 percent from a 2.8/8 overnight rating for last year's Big 12 championship between Oklahoma and Missouri in Kansas City.

ABC also posted a 6.7 overnight household rating for last week's game, up 26 percent from last year.

Last summer, Beebe noted, "We'll experience what it's like here. The last time we awarded certain cities championships, the board of directors said we're not ready to lock them in yet (as permanent sites).

"But they haven't seen this."

Judging from the large turnout of Nebraska fans, and the hoards enjoying the spacious tailgate spots before last week's game, I doubt the league is going to worry much, if at all, about whether Cowboys Stadium gives one team the 'home' edge. **N**



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Bob Terrio

Still living his life in the fast lane

BOB TERRIO HAS been retired from the City of Fullerton, Calif., Police Department for five years now, but when we ask him if he's still living his life in the fast lane, you get his favorite answer to every question: "You better believe it!"

Nebraska's starting weakside linebacker on back-to-back national championship football teams in 1970-71 admits that "I was the guy people hated to see in their rear-view mirrors," he said, "because I spent the last 16 years in the department on a motorcycle."

Terrio chased down runaway motorists with the same gusto he tracked down the fastest running backs.

Some might remember that Terrio was the Husker player going helmet-to-helmet with the Sooners' Greg Pruitt on the Sports Illustrated cover before the 1971 Game of the Century. SI's pre-game description was "Irresistible Oklahoma Meets Immovable Nebraska."

Six weeks later, after Nebraska mauled Alabama to claim its second straight national title, Terrio made the cover of Sports Illustrated again, hoisting the ball as teammates Larry Jacobson and Bill Janssen celebrate under this description: "AWESOME

NEBRASKA ... Bob Terrio recovers an Alabama fumble."

Life was fast then, and it still is now. "You better believe it!" Terrio says, explaining that he's always in high gear trying to keep up with 11 grandchildren.

On a recent fall weekend, for instance, he drove from Fullerton to Fontana, Calif., to watch Alex, his 15-year-old granddaughter cheer at a football game.

That same day, he drove to Redlands to watch 6-year-old grandson Hayden play soccer.

And before the sun went down, the one-time motorcycle cop was in Placentia, Calif., watching 10-year-old grandson Nolan play in a Pop Warner football game.

Was it fun? "You better believe it!" Terrio said. "I try to be there for all 11 grandchildren, who range from age 17 all the way down to two months. Life is

short, so I keep it simple and enjoy every minute I can."

Terrio describes himself as "the biggest caregiver you've ever seen." His 82-year-old mother-in-law lives with him and wife Diane, and his 80-year-old mother is just five doors away.

"Do they keep me



BOB TERRIO

LETTERS: 1970-71

POSITION: Weakside linebacker

WIFE: Diane

CHILDREN: Son Robert, 38; daughters Joey Doyle, 35, and Lindsey Coon, 30; 11 grandchildren.

CURRENT: Retired senior officer who spent 28 years working for the Fullerton, Calif., Police Department

RESIDENCE: Ontario, Calif.

hopping? You better believe it!" Terrio said. "But I'm always on call. Whenever any of the kids want me to babysit, I'm there."

Terrio makes sure he carves out time for himself, too. "I'm going trout fishing Friday," he said, "and a month from now, I'll be deer hunting in Alabama for two weeks, just like I've done for 13 straight years."

Come May, Terrio and 20 of his former policemen will camp out and take a fishing trip to the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and in August, he'll be salmon fishing in British Columbia, just like always.

When Terrio says he has no regrets about any part of his life, especially the time he spent in Nebraska after Tom Osborne recruited him in junior college, you – say it with me now – better believe it. **N**



New Mexico

Dec. 19, 3:30 p.m., Albuquerque, ESPN



Fresno State
(8-4)



Wyoming
(6-6)

Little Ceasars

Dec. 26, 12 p.m., Detroit, ESPN



Marshall
(6-6)



Ohio
(9-5)

Champs Sports

Dec. 29, 7 p.m., Orlando, ESPN



Miami
(9-3)



Wisconsin
(9-3)

R+L Carries New Orleans

Dec. 20, 7 p.m., New Orleans, ESPN



Southern Miss
(7-5)



Middle Tennessee
(9-3)

Meineke Car Care

Dec. 26, 3:30 p.m., Charlotte, ESPN



Pitt
(9-3)



North Carolina
(8-4)

Roady's Humanitarian

Dec. 30, 3:30 p.m., Boise, ESPN



Bowling Green
(7-5)



Idaho
(7-5)

MAACO Las Vegas

Dec. 22, 7 p.m., Las Vegas, ESPN



Oregon State
(8-4)



BYU
(10-2)

Emerald

Dec. 26, 7 p.m., San Francisco, ESPN



Boston College
(8-4)



USC
(8-4)

Bell Helicopter Armed Forces

Dec. 31, 11 a.m., Fort Worth, ESPN



Houston
(10-3)



Air Force
(7-5)

SD County Credit Union Poinsettia

Dec. 23, 7 p.m., San Diego, ESPN



Utah
(9-3)



Cal
(8-4)

Gaylord Hotels Music City

Dec. 27, 7:30 p.m., Nashville, ESPN



Kentucky
(7-5)



Clemson
(8-5)

Brut Sun

Dec. 31, 1 p.m., CBS



Oklahoma
(7-5)



Stanford
(8-4)

Sheraton Hawaii Bowl

Dec. 24, 7 p.m., Honolulu, ESPN



Nevada
(8-4)



SMU
(7-5)

AdvoCare V100 Independence

Dec. 28, 4 p.m., Shreveport, ESPN2



Texas A&M
(6-6)



Georgia
(7-5)

Texas

Dec. 31, 2:30 p.m., ESPN



Navy
(8-4)



Missouri
(8-4)

Insight

Dec. 31, 5 p.m., Tempe, NFL Network

Minnesota
(6-6)Iowa State
(6-6)**Rose Bowl**

Jan. 1, 3:30 p.m., Pasadena, ABC

Ohio State
(10-2)Oregon
(10-2)**AutoZone Liberty**

Jan. 2, 4:30 p.m., Memphis, ESPN

Arkansas
(7-5)East Carolina
(9-4)**Chick-fil-A**

Dec. 31, 6:30 p.m., ESPN

Virginia Tech
(9-3)Tennessee
(7-5)**Allstate Sugar**

Jan. 1, 7:30 p.m., New Orleans, FOX

Florida
(12-1)Cincinnati
(12-0)**Valero Alamo**

Jan. 2, 8 p.m., ESPN

Michigan State
(6-6)Texas Tech
(8-4)**Outback**

Jan. 1, 10 a.m., ESPN

Northwestern
(8-4)Auburn
(7-5)**International**

Jan. 2, 11 a.m., Toronto, ESPN2

South Florida
(7-5)Northern Illinois
(7-5)**Tostitos Fiesta**

Jan. 4, 7 p.m., Glendale, AZ, FOX

Boise State
(13-0)TCU
(12-0)**Capital One**

Jan. 1, 12 p.m., Orlando, ABC

Penn State
(10-2)LSU
(9-3)**Papajohns.com**

Jan. 2, 1 p.m., Birmingham, ESPN

South Carolina
(7-5)UConn
(7-5)**FedEx Orange**

Jan. 5, 7 p.m., Miami, FOX

Iowa
(10-2)Georgia Tech
(11-2)**Konica Minolta Gator**

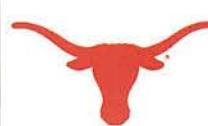
Jan. 1, 12 p.m., Jacksonville, CBS

West Virginia
(9-3)Florida State
(6-6)**AT&T Cotton**

Jan. 2, 1 p.m., Arlington, FOX

Oklahoma State
(9-3)Ole Miss
(8-4)**CITI BCS National Championship**

Jan. 7, 7 p.m., Pasadena, ABC

Texas
(13-0)Alabama
(13-0)

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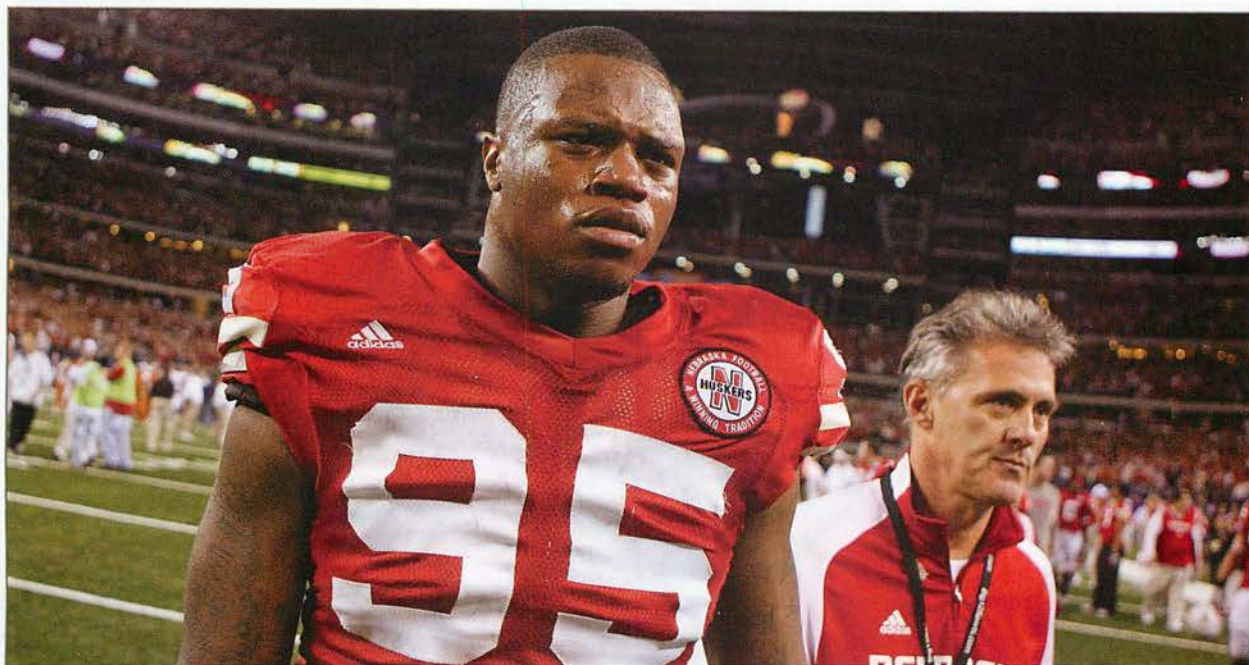


PHOTO BY SCOTT BRUHN

One too many

ONE SECOND was one too many for Nebraska in the Big 12 Conference championship game.

With the Cornhuskers leading undefeated and heavily favored Texas 12-10, the Longhorns faced a third-and-13 situation from the Nebraska 29-yard line with the clock winding down in the fourth quarter. Texas quarterback Colt McCoy, scrambling to his right, felt heavy pressure and intentionally threw a pass out of bounds.

When the play was finished, game clocks at Cowboys Stadium showed time had expired. Nebraska's players began rushing onto the field, head coach Bo Pelini raised his arms in the air and, for a brief moment, it appeared the Huskers were Big 12 champions.

Then came the heartbreak for Nebraska.

Following a review, the replay official ruled 1 second remained when McCoy's pass fell incomplete. One second was all Texas needed as Hunter Lawrence's 46-yard field-goal attempt curled just inside the left upright, giving the Longhorns a 13-12 victory and denying Nebraska its first conference title since 1999.

While TV replays appeared to justify putting 1 second back on the clock, it didn't lessen the disappointment for the Huskers.

"A lot of us were upset, but the referees felt like there was a second left on the clock," Nebraska wide receiver Niles Paul said. "That was their decision. That's pretty much all I can say about that."

Mack Brown said he was confident time still remained after McCoy's incomplete pass. Still, the veteran Texas coach was cognizant of how some might

remember the 2009 Big 12 title game.

"I think in Lincoln it will be the clock, and in Austin it will be the comeback," Brown said. "That's about the way it happens in sports."

Pelini said he's suffered some difficult losses during his career, but this time his disappointment was more for his players.

"It's not about me, it's about these young men and I hurt for them," Pelini said. "I hurt because of the effort they gave."

"I told them — every single guy in that locker room — all you ask in life is to be able to, when you're done with the football game . . . you can walk out of that locker room and hold your head high. And I promise you, there isn't a guy on our football team that can't hold his head high and be proud of that effort we gave." **N** — by Terry Douglass



PHOTO BY SCOTT BRUHN

UNSTOPPABLE SUH

Any remaining questions about who is the nation's best defensive player were perhaps cleared up by Nebraska's **NDAMUKONG SUH** with his sterling performance in a 13-12 Big 12 championship game loss against Texas.

Suh finished with 12 tackles and seven tackles for loss, including a career-high and Big 12 title game record 4.5 sacks, to go with two quarterback hurries. The senior defensive tackle was in Texas' backfield so frequently that Longhorns quarterback **COLT MCCOY** joked that he Suh were "best friends."

"The guy's a playmaker," McCoy said. "All night long, Suh played tremendous."

Asked about playing perhaps the best game of his career against one of the country's top offensive units, Suh credited Nebraska defensive coordinator **CARL PELINI** and assistant coach **JOHN PAPUCHIS** for their ability to break

down opponents and relay the necessary information to the players.

"We understand formations and everything and know what to expect, so that allows us to have that edge to when we see this formation or see certain things (or) have these keys," Suh said. "We can go about our business and be disruptive."

Suh has 12 sacks this season, tying him for third all-time on the Nebraska single-season charts and he's tied for fourth on the program's all-time list with 24 sacks. Suh's 22 tackles for loss in 2009 are tied for second on the single-season list and his 55 career tackles for loss leaves him only behind Grant Wistrom (58.5 career TFLs) in Husker history.

"He was all over the place and we just couldn't handle him," Texas coach Mack Brown said of Suh. "I tried to find him after the game to wish him good luck in the NFL, because I don't want to see him again."

DOMINANT 'D'

Despite the loss, Nebraska's defensive performance against Texas was nothing short of spectacular. The Longhorns, who came into the contest ranked third in the nation in scoring offense (43 points per game), were held 30 points below their season average limited to 202 yards of total offense on 74 snaps — an average of 2.7 yards per play.

The Huskers held Texas to 18 net yards rushing and sacked Longhorns quarterback **COLT MCCOY** nine times.

"I've said it all along. They're a special group of guys," said Nebraska defensive coordinator **CARL PELINI**, whose unit has held opposing offenses to their season low in total yards in 12 of 13 games this season. "They believe — and they proved it tonight — they can line up across from anyone in the country and whip their tails."

QUICKLY

HAILING HENERY

Nebraska place kicker **ALEX HENERY** tied the Big 12 championship game record by converting four field-goal attempts against Texas. The junior, who had a 52-yard field goal late in the first quarter, hit a 42-yarder to give the Huskers a 12-10 lead with 1:44 to play.

However, Henery said he was by no means confident that his final field goal would be the game-winner.

"I knew there was still time after I hit that," Henery said. "So I just made sure our guys knew that we had to make a stop there, but I hit it well."

Henery's fourth field goal against Texas also set a new Nebraska single-season record with 20. That surpassed the old mark of 19 field goals set by Jordan Congdon in 2006.

SPECIAL-TEAMS SPARK

With Nebraska's offense struggling mightily, **NILES PAUL** was at least able to provide the Huskers with a spark on special teams. The junior wide receiver had a 43-yard punt return to the Texas 10-yard line to set up a field goal and also had a 42-yard kickoff return.

"I was just out there trying to make a play for my team," Paul said. "People were blocking real hard and everybody was — I just followed my instincts. Things went well."

WORTH NOTING

—The loss dropped Nebraska to 1-2 against Texas and 2-3 overall in Big 12 title games. The Huskers are now 1-2 against Texas in the Big 12 title game. The Huskers are 1-7 against the Longhorns in the Big 12 era and 4-9 all-time.



PHOTO BY AARON BABCOCK

Nebraska safety **MATT O'HANLON** said the Blackshirts' objective was simple.

"Basically, we just wanted to limit their play-making ability," O'Hanlon said. "I think we did a pretty good job of that."

PRAISING NEBRASKA

Texas coach **MACK BROWN** offered Nebraska his congratulations for "a great effort" in the post-game press conference, saying that coach **BO PELINI** obviously had the Huskers ready to play.

"I think we can all say that Nebraska's back," Brown said. "They've got really good football players. To start the season 4-3 like they did and end up playing as hard as they have the remainder of the year, and come out playing like they did tonight is a great credit to them."

Brown said that while Husker fans might be disappointed with the loss, they should be encouraged about the future of Nebraska's program.

"I think it will be the beginning of what Bo's going to do at Nebraska," Brown said. "I think this is a turning point for them because

they beat Clemson in the Gator Bowl last year right in the end. They had a chance to win this one throughout the game tonight and played it down to the end.

"There are so many good things that Nebraska can take out of tonight."

NO OFFENSE

As has been the case in all four of Nebraska's losses this season, a lack of offensive production hurt the Huskers in their bid to upset Texas. NU's 106 yards of total offense were the program's lowest output in the past 25 years, undercutting the 135 total yards Nebraska gained in a 1989 Orange Bowl loss against Miami (Fla.)

"We couldn't get any movement up front. They limited our running game," Nebraska coach **BO PELINI** said. "They're a good defense — formidable group — very talented, well-coached.

"Our formula was to hang in there and have a chance to win it. We had a chance to win it at the end and we didn't get it done. We had to play to the strengths of our football team."



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TEXAS



NEBRASKA



NDAMUKONG SUH DRAGS DOWN TEXAS QB COLT MCCOY FOR ONE OF HIS 4.5 SACKS IN THE BIG 12 TITLE GAME. PHOTO BY AARON BABCOCK



TOP LEFT: Cowboys Stadium prior to the game. (PHOTO BY AARON BABCOCK) **ABOVE:** Eric Hagg intercepts Colt McCoy. (PHOTO BY SCOTT BRUHN) **BELOW:** Brandon Kinnie hauls in a pass between Texas defenders. (BABCOCK) **LEFT:** Matt O'Hanlon upends WR Jordan Shipley.



REPORT CARD

RUSHING:

ZAC LEE opened Nebraska's drive to the field goal that made the score 12-10 with a 17-yard run. So much for the positives. The Cornhuskers averaged less than 2 yards per rush. For what it's worth, Texas was even less productive on the ground. But there's no scaling of grades here.

PASSING:

Lee completed only 6-of-19 passes for 39 yards – and threw three interceptions. **CODY GREEN** threw one pass, which was nearly intercepted. Finding something positive in the passing game was next to impossible. And the responsibility didn't rest with Lee alone. He had little time to find receivers.

RUSHING DEFENSE:

Texas didn't exactly distinguish itself rushing the ball this season. But the Longhorns did average 163.9 yards per game on the ground. Even subtracting 20 yards in losses from sacks of **COLT MCCOY**, their running game was powerless. They averaged ½ yard per carry. That's not a misprint.

PASSING DEFENSE:

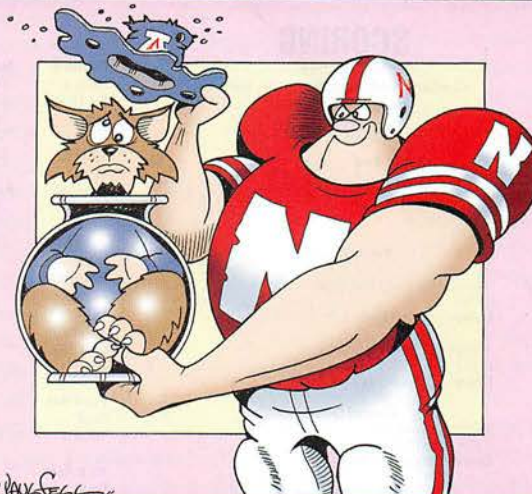
The Longhorns ranked 13th nationally in passing offense, averaging nearly 300 yards per game. McCoy had thrown only nine interceptions in 432 attempts. Nebraska intercepted him three times and limited him to 189 passing yards. Oh yes, they sacked him nine times – count 'em, nine.

KICKING/SPECIAL TEAMS:

Reliable **ALEX HENERY** kicked four field goals, and **NILES PAUL** had two big returns, 43 yards on a punt and 42 yards on a kickoff. But Henery averaged only 37.1 yards on eight punts, atypical for him. And **ADI KUNALIC**'s final out-of-bounds kickoff – also atypical – jump-started the Longhorns' winning drive.

THE PAUL FELL PREDICTION

NEBRASKA vs. ARIZONA



DECEMBER 30, 2009
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ABOVE: Assistant Coach Ron Brown reacts to a play. (PHOTO BY AARON BABCOCK) BOTTOM LEFT: Brandon Kinnie tries to haul in a potential touchdown pass. (BABCOCK) BOTTOM RIGHT: Prince Amukamara snags one of Nebraska's 3 interceptions. (BRUHN)



GameStats

SUMMARY

SCORING

Dec. 5, 2009
Cowboys Stadium • Arlington, Neb.
Attendance: 76,211

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Tot
Texas	0	7	3	3	13
Nebraska	6	0	0	6	12

First Quarter

		UT	NU
NU	Henry 45-yard Field Goal 11:04 Drive: 8 plays 13 yds 3:20	0	3
NU	Henry 52-yard Field Goal 06:32 Drive: 4 plays 9 yds 1:35	0	6

Second Quarter

UT	McCoy 2-yard Run (Lawrence Kick) 02:19 Drive: 9 plays 42 yds 4:41	7	6
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Third Quarter

UT	Lawrence 39-yard Field Goal 01:40 Drive: 6 plays 30 yds 2:16	10	6
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Fourth Quarter

NU	Henry 28-yard Field Goal 11:34 Drive: 4 plays -1 yds 1:21	10	9
NU	Henry 42-yard Field Goal 01:44 Drive: 8 plays 43 yds 3:12	10	12
UT	Lawrence 46-yard Field Goal 00:00 Drive: 5 plays 31 yds 1:44	13	12

TEAM STATS

	UT	NU
Total First Downs	17	5
Rushing	3	2
Passing	10	3
Penalty	4	0
Rushing Attempts	38	35
Yards Gained Rushing	81	81
Yards Lost Rushing	63	14
Net Yards Rushing	18	67
Net Yards Passing	184	39
Passes Attempted	36	20
Passes Completed	20	6
Had Intercepted	3	3
Percent Completion	55.6%	30.0%
Yards per Attempt	5.1	1.9
Yards per Completion	9.2	6.5
Total Offensive Plays	74	55
Total Net Yards	202	106
Avg. Gain Per Play	2.7	1.9
Fumbles: No-Lost	0-0	0-0
Penalties: No-Yards	7-45	7-64
Punts: No-Yards	9-355	8-297
Avg. Per Punt	39.4	37.1
Avg. Net Punt	34.0	36.5
Punt Returns: No-Yards	1-5	3-49
Kickoff Returns: No-Yards	2-22	3-79
Interception Returns: No-Yards	3-4	3-0
Fumble Returns: No-Yards	0-0	0-0
Miscellaneous Yards	0	0
Possession Time	32:00	28:00
Third-Down Conversions	6-19	2-16
Percentage	31.6%	12.5%
Fourth-Down Conversions	0-0	1-1
Percentage	0.0%	100.0%
Sacks By: No-Yards	1-8	9-52

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

NEBRASKA

Rushing	No	Gain	Lost	Net	Avg	TD	Lg
Helu Jr.	10	32	4	28	2.8	0	7
Burkhead	17	24	2	22	1.3	0	5
Lee	6	20	8	12	2.0	0	17
Green	2	5	0	5	2.5	0	3
Total	35	81	14	67	1.9	0	17

Passing	Att	Comp	%	Int	Yds	TD	Lg
Lee	19	6	31.6	3	39	0	16
Green	1	0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Total	20	6	30.0	3	39	0	16

Receiving	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Kinnie	2	30	0	16
Paul	1	4	0	4
Robinson	1	4	0	4
Burkhead	2	1	0	6
Total	6	39	0	16

Punt Ret	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Paul	3	49	0	43
Total	3	49	0	43

Kick Ret	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Paul	1	42	0	42
Marlowe	2	37	0	20
Total	3	79	0	42

Punting	No	Avg	Lg	Blk	TB	FC	50+	In 20
Henry	8	37.1	42	0	0	4	0	2
Total	8	37.1	42	0	0	4	0	2

Field Goals	Made	Att	Lg	Blkd
Henry	4	4	52	0
Total	4	4	52	0

Defense	Tac	Asst	Tot	TFL	Sac	PD	FF	FR
Suh	10	2	12	6-22	4.5-21	0	0	0
Amukamara	6	1	7	0-0	0-0	1	0	0
Turner	5	2	7	3.5-17	2.5-13	1	0	0
Asante	4	2	6	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Dillard	4	2	6	2-6	0-0	0	0	0
Gomes	3	2	5	1.5-2	0-0	0	0	0
O'Hanlon	4	1	5	1-11	1-11	0	0	0
Crick	1	2	3	0.5-4	0-4	0	0	0
Paul	3	0	3	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Allen	0	2	2	0-0	0-0	1	0	0
Hagg	2	0	2	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Meredith	1	1	2	0.5-3	0.5-3	0	0	0
Dennard	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Fisher	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Martin	0	1	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Smith	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0

Interception Ret	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Amukamara	1	0	0	0
Gomes	1	0	0	0
Hagg	1	0	0	0
Total	3	0	0	0

TEXAS

Rushing	No	Gain	Lost	Net	Avg	TD	Lg
Newton	19	42	6	36	1.9	0	8
Johnson	1	2	0	2	2.0	0	2
Whittaker	1	0	0	0	0.0	0	0
McCoy	17	37	57	-20	-1.2	1	14
Total	38	81	63	18	0.5	1	14

Passing	Att	Comp	%	Int	Yds	TD	Lg
McCoy	36	20	55.6	3	184	0	25
Total	36	20	55.6	3	184	0	25

Receiving	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Shipley	7	71	0	19
Williams	3	52	0	20
Newton	5	43	0	25
Buckner	3	14	0	8
Goodwin	2	4	0	6
Total	20	184	0	25

Punt Ret	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Shipley	1	5	0	5
Total	1	5	0	5

Kick Ret	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Goodwin	2	22	0	22
Total	2	22	0	22

Punting	No	Avg	Lg	Blk	TB	FC	50+	In 20
Tucker	6	45.7	51	0	0	0	2	2
McCoy	2	37.0	38	0	0	0	0	2
TEAM	1	7.0	7	0	0	0	0	0
Total	9	39.4	51	0	0	0	2	4

Field Goals	Made	Att	Lg	Blkd
Lawrence	2	2	46	0
Total	2	2	46	0

Defense	Tac	Asst	Tot	TFL	Sac	PD	FF	FR
Acho	7	3	10	1-8	1-8	0	0	0
Robinson	6	4	10	1-5	0-0	0	0	0
Houston	4	2	6	0-0	0-0	1	0	0
Muckelroy	4	2	6	0.5-1	0-0	0	0	0
Alexander	4	1	5	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Williams	2	3	5	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Kindle	2	2	4	1-4	0-0	1	0	0
Acho	0	2	2	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Thomas	1	1	2	0-0	0-0	1	0	0
Brewster	0	1	1	0.5-1	0-0	0	0	0
Brown	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Brown	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Gideon	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	1	0	0
Graham	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Kirkendoll	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
McCoy	0	1	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Tucker	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0

Interception Ret	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Muckelroy	1	4	0	4
Gideon	1	0	0	0
Williams	1	0	0	0
Total	3	4	0	4

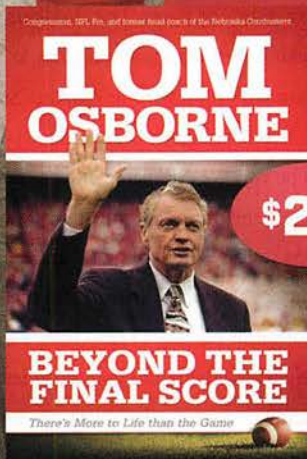
Sat., Sept. 5	Florida Atlantic	Memorial Stadium	W, 49-3
Sat., Sept. 12	Arkansas State	Memorial Stadium	W, 38-9
Sat., Sept. 19	Virginia Tech	Blacksburg, Va.	L, 15-16
Sat., Sept. 26	La-Lafayette	Memorial Stadium	W, 55-0
Thur., Oct. 8	Missouri	Columbia, Mo.	W, 27-12
Sat., Oct. 17	Texas Tech	Memorial Stadium	L, 10-30
Sat., Oct. 24	Iowa State	Memorial Stadium	L, 7-9
Sat., Oct. 31	Baylor	Waco, Texas	W, 20-10
Sat., Nov. 7	Oklahoma	Memorial Stadium	W, 10-3
Sat., Nov. 14	Kansas	Lawrence, Kan.	W, 31-17
Sat., Nov. 21	Kansas State	Memorial Stadium	W, 17-3
Fri., Nov. 27	Colorado	Boulder, Colo.	W, 28-20
Sat., Dec. 5	vs. Texas	Arlington, Texas	L, 12-13

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Wildcats exceed expectations with eight wins, Holiday bid

BY TERRY DOUGLASS



EVEN AS ARIZONA struggled to a 25-34 record in his first five seasons as the program's head coach, Mike Stoops said he always believed his Wildcats were capable of more.

"We were in a tough position six years ago when we inherited the program," Stoops said. "When there's change and you haven't had much success, you're going to go through some difficult times.

"We went through some struggles, but I never lost hope in that we were getting better as a program and it came in small increments."

Stoops' faith was rewarded this season. Picked to finish eighth in the Pac-10 pre-season media poll, the No. 22-ranked Wildcats ended 8-4 overall and finished second in the conference standings, earning a bid to the Dec. 30 Pacific Life Holiday Bowl at San Diego to play No. 20-ranked Nebraska (9-4).

While Nebraska's players have had to deal with the disappointment of losing the Big 12 championship game in the final second, Arizona's players can relate. The Wildcats were just six seconds away from a victory over eventual Pac-10 champion and Rose Bowl qualifier Oregon, but the Ducks tied the score to force overtime before pulling out a 44-41 victory.

"We could have very easily gone to the Rose Bowl," Arizona center Colin Baxter said. "We could be in a very different situation right now based on a couple of plays, but we're not and that's all right. We're still at a much better place than we



MIKE STOOPS

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

were at this time last year."

Especially for a team picked to finish eighth.

"We never thought that," Baxter said. "We always expected a lot more of ourselves and that's what we went out there and proved."

Oregon was the only team in the upper half of the Pac-10 standings that Arizona didn't defeat in a season where six of its nine conference games were decided by five points or fewer. The Wildcats overcame their disappointing loss to Oregon with road wins at Arizona State (20-17) and Southern California (21-17).

"The way we competed all year is probably the thing I am most proud of," Stoops said. "When you look at the entirety of the whole season and the way our kids played, I really have a lot of respect for them and their coaches for enduring everything we have been through and never really quitting."

NOTES

► Not only do Arizona head coach Mike Stoops and Nebraska head coach Bo Pelini both hail from the same hometown of Youngstown, Ohio, but they also both have brothers serving as

ARIZONA QUICK FACTS

Head coach: Mike Stoops, sixth season, 33-38, all at Arizona

Series: Arizona leads, 1-0-1

At Lincoln: The two teams played to a 14-14 tie in 1961

At neutral sites: Arizona leads, 1-0, defeating Nebraska 23-20 in the 1998 Holiday Bowl at San Diego

All-time bowl record: 6-7-1

2009 SCHEDULE

9/5	Central Michigan, W, 19-6
9/12	Northern Arizona, W, 34-17
9/19	at Iowa, L, 27-17
9/26	at Oregon St., W, 27-32
10/10	at Washington, L, 36-33
10/17	Stanford, W, 43-38
10/24	UCLA, W, 27-13
11/7	Washington St., W, 48-7
11/14	at California, L, 24-16
11/21	Oregon, L, 44-41 (OT)
11/28	at Arizona St., W, 20-17
12/5	at Southern Cal, W, 21-17

defensive coordinators on their respective staffs. Mark Stoops is the defensive coordinator for the Wildcats, while Carl Pelini handles the same position for the Huskers. "Obviously, Bo is a close friend of mine and my family and certainly (so is) Carl. ... It's going to be different, but really in football or any competition, once the game starts you block all that out and concentrate on the things you need to win."

► Including its 23-20 win over Nebraska in the 1998 Holiday Bowl, Arizona owns a three-game winning streak in bowl games. That includes last year's Las Vegas Bowl victory over BYU and a 1997 win in the Insight.com Bowl against New Mexico.

► The 32nd Pacific Life Holiday Bowl between No. 20-ranked Nebraska (9-4) and No. 22 Arizona (8-4) will kick off at 7 p.m. (CST) from Qualcomm Stadium in San Diego. ESPN will televise the game live to a national cable audience.

HUSKER LEADERS

[RUSHING]

Roy Helu, Jr. 217-1,139 yards (5.2), 10 TDs
Rex Burkhead 64-257 (4.0), 2 TDs

[PASSING]

Zac Lee 164-279-10, 1,970 yards, 13 TDs
Cody Green 33-60-2, 317 yards, 2 TDs

[RECEIVING]

Niles Paul 36-673 yards, 3 TDs
Mike McNeill 25-240, 4 TDs
Roy Helu, Jr. 19-149

[TACKLES]

Ndamukong Suh, DT 82 (50 solo)
Larry Asante, S 76 (40)
Phillip Dillard, LB 76 (40)
Jared Crick, DT 70 (30)

[TACKLES FOR LOSS]

Ndamukong Suh, DT 23-92 yards in losses
Barry Turner, DE 16-50
Jared Crick, DT 15-63

[SACKS]

Ndamukong Suh, DT 12-77 yards in losses
Jared Crick, DT 9.5-57

[INTERCEPTIONS]

Matt O'Hanlon, S 5
Prince Amukamara, CB 5
Dejon Gomes, CB 4

WILDCAT LEADERS

[RUSHING]

Keola Antolin 103-568 (5.5), 4 TDs
Nic Grigsby 75-559 (7.5), 5 TDs

[PASSING]

Nick Foles 249-377-8, 2,420 yards, 19, TDs
Matt Scott 40-71-3, 443 yards, 1 TD

[RECEIVING]

Terrell Turner 47-450, 4 TDs
Juron Criner 43-580, 9 TDs
David Roberts 42-398, 1 TD

[TACKLES]

Devin Ross, CB 74 (55)
Xavier Kelley, LB 69 (39)
Apaiaa Tuihalamaka, DE 68 (41)
Trevin Wade, CB 66 (49)

[TACKLES FOR LOSS]

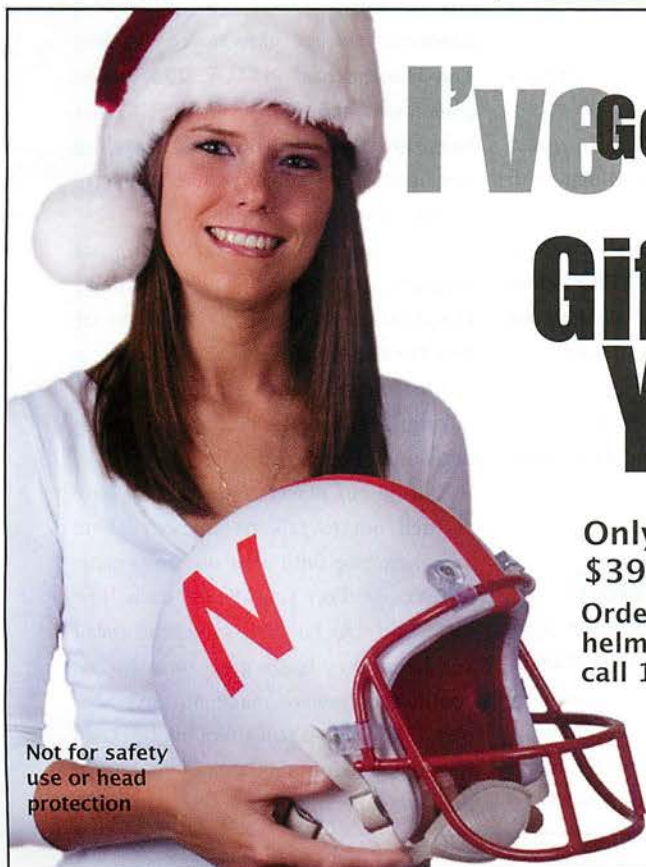
Earl Mitchell, DT 12.5-46
Ricky Elmore, DE 11.5-64

[SACKS]

Ricky Elmore, DE 10.5-62
Earl Mitchell, DT 6.5-32

[INTERCEPTIONS]

Trevin Wade, CB 5
Robert Golden, CB 2



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Flexible but keeps its shape

Owa enjoys visit to Lincoln

BY SEAN STEVENS

The highest-rated recruit to visit Nebraska officially for the 2010 recruiting class was defensive end **OWAMAGBE ODIGHIZUWA**, a 5-star prospect from Portland, Ore., David Douglas High School. Odighizuwa made the trip to Lincoln to see Nebraska wrap up the Big 12 North Division title with a 17-3 victory over Kansas State on Nov. 21. To say that he came away impressed would be understating it a bit.

"I really liked it," Odighizuwa said. "I just enjoyed meeting the players, coaches, and the fans – everybody out there."

"Owa," as he's known, enjoyed the opportunity to meet with NU Athletic Director **TOM OSBORNE** during his trip as well.

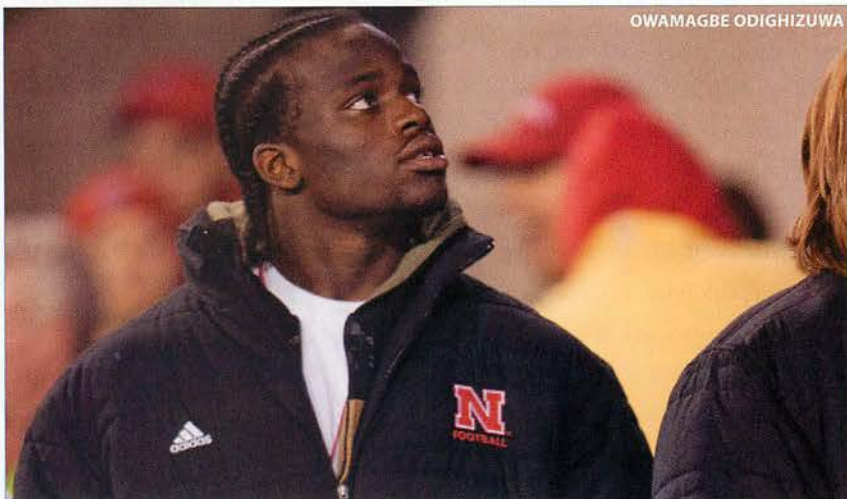
"I thought it was really cool meeting with him," Odighizuwa said. "We just talked about the Nebraska tradition and just what he's done over the past (several) years, how the fans are, the whole support from the state of Nebraska. And it was just real cool. I felt like I was talking to a legend, and I mean, I was talking to a legend. It was real nice meeting him."

The legendary hospitality of Husker Nation also had an impact on Odighizuwa.

"The fans were the most impressive thing to me," the 6-foot-3, 234-pounder explained. "The fans, they really support their football team. And I felt like that was just incredible. How they treat their guys and how respectful they were. They never really dogged the other team like a few of the other schools I've been to, so that's one thing I noticed."

"I thought the game was crazy, the fans were nuts, in a good way. They all knew who I was and just treated me real well. I just really enjoyed that."

Defensive ends coach John Papuchis



OWAMAGBE ODIGHIZUWA

has been instrumental in the Huskers' pursuit of Odighizuwa, and the chance to spend time with the coach while in Lincoln helped move the relationship forward.

"I got to know him a lot more in person," Odighizuwa said. "I thought he was a really cool person. I spent quite a bit of time with him talking about football, life and everything like that. We talked about his family and his journey to being a coach."

Odighizuwa has now officially visited Nebraska, Cal and UCLA along with unofficial visits to Oregon and Oregon State. He took a trip to Florida on Nov. 28, as well, and will see USC before making a final decision. The Huskers put themselves in good position, though.

"Well they're definitely in my top three or four," he said. "You know, I feel like in the end it will be them and a few other schools...UCLA and Cal potentially, Oregon, Florida . . . and USC."

JUCO RECRUITS VISIT

Also in town for the Kansas State game were teammates **LAVONTE DAVID**, **JERMARCUS HARDRICK**, and Anthony White from Fort Scott, Kan., Community College. All three are former teammates of Husker wide receiver **BRANDON**

KINNIE, and all were excited about the opportunity to see first-hand why Kinnie chose Nebraska.

Hardrick, a 6-7, 320-pound offensive tackle, was the only one to visit with a Nebraska offer, but he had already committed to LSU. While the others didn't hold NU offers, David, a 6-1, 214-pound linebacker, seemed likely to receive one. The Huskers lose **PHILLIP DILLARD** to graduation, and **BLAKE LAWRENCE** has had to give up football because of recurring concussions, so some mature depth at linebacker would seem to fit the bill.

"You know, Nebraska is a nice program, lot of tradition and everything," David said before the trip. "I want to see how the atmosphere is at the game."

After the visit, none of the players was talking, but that was because of a team decision at Fort Scott.

"All of our players on our team have decided not to talk to anybody about anywhere else until after our bowl game on Dec. 6," Fort Scott head coach **JEFF SIMS** said. "As far as this weekend goes I know that they had a great time. But no commitments were made on anybody's part. (Hardrick) is still attending LSU and Lavonte and Anthony are still looking at their available options."

DALLAS MEANS MORE EXPOSURE

Nebraska's visit to Arlington, Texas, for the Big 12 title game was another great chance to show Texas high schools what the Big Red program is all about. There are already nine members of the 2011 recruiting class with confirmed Nebraska offers, and more than half of them live and play in the Dallas Metroplex.

Playmakers such as wide receivers **JOHNNY HAYNES** of Irving, **TREY METOYER** of Whitehouse and **MILES ONYEBULE** of Arlington as well as quarterback **JAMAL TURNER** of Arlington are all Husker targets who, no doubt, heard from the NU coaching staff before the game.

Another underclass Texan is running back **AARON GREEN** of San Antonio Madison, who is arguably the top target on NU's board for 2011.

NEBRASKA'S OFFICIAL VISITS

NAME	POS.	HT	WT	DATE	COMMIT
Kenny Bell	ATH	6-2	173	12/11	
Braylon Heard	RB	5-11	180	12/11	West Virginia
Lavonte David	LB	6-1	214	11/21	Nebraska
Tyler Evans	ATH	6-2	180	11/21	Nebraska
Tyler Gabbert	QB	6-0	190	11/21	
Jermarcus Hardrick	OL	6-6	320	11/21	Nebraska
Jonathan Mack	DB	5-10	175	11/21	
Owamagbe	DE	6-3	234	11/21	
Odighizuwa					
Anthony White	DT	6-3	305	11/21	
Corey Cooper	DB	6-2	203	11/6	Illinois
Jay Guy	DT	6-1	300	11/7	Nebraska
Austin Hill	WR	6-3	192	11/7	
Derrick Malone	DB	5-11	165	11/7	Oregon
Joshua Mitchell	DB	5-11	165	11/7	Nebraska
Harold Mobley	ATH	6-4	225	11/7	
Tobi Okuyemi	DE	6-3	250	11/7	Nebraska
Tyler Slavin	WR	6-2	182	11/7	Arizona
Giovanni Bernard	RB	5-9	198	10/24	Notre Dame
Curtis Carter	ATH	5-10	161	10/17	
Quincy Enunwa	WR	6-2	200	10/17	Nebraska
Andre Hal	DB	6-0	170	10/17	Vanderbilt
Derron Smith	DB	5-11	173	10/17	
Ciante Evans	DB	5-11	170	9/26	Nebraska
Chase Harper	TE	6-6	248	9/26	Nebraska
Joshua Reese	WR	6-1	182	9/26	
Chase Rome	DE	6-3	290	9/26	Nebraska
Bud Sasser	WR	6-3	200	9/26	
Bobby Swigert	WR	6-1	175	9/26	Boston College
Colin Tanigawa	OL	6-3	286	9/26	Washington
Willis Wright	WR	6-2	185	9/26	
Harvey Jackson	DB	6-2	185	9/5	Nebraska
Tejay Johnson	ATH	6-2	190	9/5	
Mike Moudy	OL	6-7	291	9/5	Nebraska
Donovan Vestal	DE	6-5	240	9/5	Nebraska



IN STATE SPOTLIGHT

BY SEAN CALLAHAN

Schuyler's **KYLE EMANUEL** is one of the top linebacker prospects in the state of Nebraska. The 6-foot-2, 220-pound Emanuel is currently a verbal commitment to North Dakota State.

CALLAHAN: Why North Dakota State?

EMANUEL: It felt right to me. The coaches made me feel wanted there. That's kind of what set it apart from other schools. I really felt that I would be an important part of the team and possibly contribute right away. I really like Fargo. It's a great town. It's not too big and it's not too small. Also, the academic part of it factored in. I want to major in construction management, and they have a great program in that, and that's what kind of sold me on them.

CALLAHAN: Have you been to North Dakota much in your life?

EMANUEL: It's funny; I had never heard of North Dakota State. I had no idea where it was. Obviously it was in North Dakota somewhere, but I didn't know where. I never thought I'd even be going there, but the coaches talked to me this summer and invited me up to a camp. I went up to a prospect camp sometime in July and it just kind of seemed right. The offer came later on in the season, and I just had some time to think about it and it seemed right for me.

CALLAHAN: You are obviously a great student in the classroom with a 4.0 GPA. What's the hardest class you've ever taken before?

EMANUEL: Probably pre-calculus, but I'm going to take calculus next term, so that will probably even be harder.

CALLAHAN: What's your favorite show to watch on TV?

EMANUEL: I would say SportsCenter or Family Guy.

CALLAHAN: Best place to eat in Schuyler?

EMANUEL: Burrito House. It's a Mexican food place, but they have a lot of stuff there. They have cheeseburgers and stuff like that. It's a good place.

CALLAHAN: What is your favorite sports play or memory?

EMANUEL: Even though I barely remember it because I was really young, I'd have to say Matt Davison's kick-catch in the end zone for Nebraska against Missouri.

Recruiting Notebook

Carter, Gabbert withdraw commits

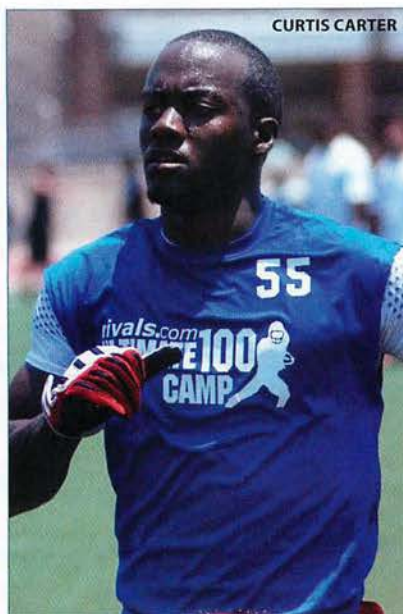
by Mike Matya

Nebraska's 2010 recruiting class suffered a temporary setback with two high school de-commits. Ballwin, Mo., quarterback **TYLER GABBERT** and Stonewall, La., receiver **CURTIS CARTER** were both rated as 4-star prospects by Rivals.com.

Coincidentally, the pair sat together in Memorial Stadium while visiting for the Huskers' game with Texas Tech. They struck up a friendship and continued to stay in touch.

Gabbert and Carter withdrew their pledges to play for Nebraska within a 24-hour period, and cited NU's late-season struggles on offense.

"I'm a slot-receiver type of guy," Carter explained. "I'm not 6-2 or 6-3. I'm going to be an inside guy, and I don't think Nebraska's offense fits me anymore. I've been watching



them all season and I watched the Big 12 championship game, and all they do now is run, run, run.

"I also have quarterback issues. I'm not comfortable with their play at quarterback at

all. The starter's not been good at all, and the freshman I'm unsure about because I haven't seen him play much."

Nebraska's current lack of an offensive identity is an obstacle Carter just couldn't get over.

"I don't know what they're going to be. I just don't know. Coach (**TED**) **GILMORE**'s words were that they were going to be a 'balanced offense.' I wouldn't be one of the receivers on the field for them because I'm not a big-body guy. They're using a fullback and several tight ends, and that wouldn't fit me. I'm a spread, high-powered West Coast offense guy."

Just as his brother, **BLAINE GABBERT**, did two years ago, Tyler committed to Nebraska in the summer prior to his senior season, and then de-committed a few months later.

Tyler Gabbert spoke with NU offensive coordinator **SHAWN WATSON** and broke the news of his change of heart.

"I called him on the phone," Gabbert said. "I went back and watched some games from the season, and it wasn't what I anticipated it to be. I also was looking at some of the depth charts at numerous positions, and I felt like the offense wasn't [going] in the direction I'd like for it to be."

Gabbert told Watson he wanted to take more visits, and Watson replied that Nebraska was, "moving on in a different direction," severing ties with the young signal-caller.

Gabbert and Carter planned to take official visits to Missouri, and Carter also wanted to see TCU, before making a final decision. **N**

2010 Nebraska Commitment List (16)

Name (Rivals.com ranking)	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Hometown (School)
Walker Ashburn ★★★	DE	6-3	245	River Ridge, La. (John Curtis)
Jake Cotton ★★	ATH	6-7	265	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
Lavonte David ★★★★★	LB	6-1	214	Fort Scott, Kan. (Fort Scott CC)
Quincy Enunwa	WR	6-2	200	Moreno Valley, Calif. (Rancho Verde)
Ciante Evans ★★	CB	5-11	170	Arlington, Texas (Juan Seguin)
Tyler Evans ★★	ATH	6-2	180	Waverly, Neb. (Waverly)
Jay Guy ★★★	DT	6-1	300	Aldine, Texas (Eisenhower)
Jermarcu Hardrick ★★★★★	OL	6-7	315	Fort Scott, Kan. (Fort Scott CC)
Chase Harper ★★★★★	TE	6-6	248	Carsicana, Texas (Navarro JC)
Harvey Jackson ★★	DB	6-2	185	Missouri City, Texas (Hightower)
Joshua Mitchell ★★	DB	5-11	165	Corona, Calif. (Eleanor Roosevelt)
Mike Moudy ★★	OL	6-7	291	Castle Rock, Colo. (Douglas County)
Tobi Okuyemi ★★	DE	6-3	250	Plymouth, Minn. (Wayzata)
Andrew Rodriguez ★★★★★	OT	6-6	300	Aurora, Neb. (Aurora)
Chase Rome ★★★★★	DE	6-3	290	Columbia, Mo. (Rock Bridge)
Donovan Vestal ★★	DE	6-5	240	Arlington, Texas (Bowie)

2011 Nebraska Commitment List (2)

Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Hometown (School)
Tyler Moore	OL	6-6	290	Clearwater, Fla. (Countryside)
Ryne Reeves	OL	6-3	286	Crete, Neb. (Crete)



DEEP IN THE HEART OF TEXAS

BY JOHN TALMAN
RECRUITING PUBLISHER,
HUSKERSILLUSTRATED.COM

Rating the North's recruiting classes

IT'S TIME TO LOOK at recruiting in the Big 12's North Division.

The Huskers have the ability to separate themselves from their division opponents when national signing day rolls around. Rivals.com has them with the top 2010 class in the North, at this point. And disagreeing with that assessment is difficult.

But let's forget about stars and formulas.

Let's look at where the class ranks, position by position, and whom the Huskers will likely have to keep their eye on when they match up with other Big 12 North teams down the road.

Kansas and Missouri are arguably the next two best classes in the North Division. But obviously, things are on shaky ground in Lawrence, Kan., with the departure of Jayhawks head coach Mark Mangino.

Missouri sits at the same number of commits as the Huskers to date – 16. Coach Gary Pinkel has done a solid job adding 4-star quarterback James Franklin from Corinth, Texas. Franklin threw for 2,360 yards and rushed for 1,282 yards as a senior at Lake Dallas High. The Tigers locked up the top prospect in Missouri, offensive tackle Nick Demien from Wentzville, Mo. Defensive end Kony Ealy is a prospect that held a Husker offer and will be one to watch while in Columbia, Mo.

Kansas State head coach Bill Snyder utilized the junior college ranks in his

first run as the Wildcats' head coach, and now it appears he's using the same formula in 2010. Seven of the 14 commits for K-State are junior college prospects. Hutchinson, Kan., Community College defensive end Adam Davis leads the group in terms of his ranking, but after rushing for close to 2,000 yards as a junior, Demarcus Robinson is probably the top high school prospect in the boat for Kansas State.

Under a new head coach in his first season, Iowa State has put together a class that is at the 20 mark in quantity and has some bright spots in quality as well. Trinity Valley (Texas) Community College wide receiver Chris Young is hailed as the most highly ranked prospect in the class. But, Garland, Texas, native Jared Barnett has the ability to run and pass, giving the Cyclones the type of quarterback everybody seems to be searching for these days.

Colorado holds 11 commitments, and with coach Dan Hawkins coming back next season, the first thing the Buffaloes have to do is finish this year's recruiting strong. It was on shaky ground throughout a disappointing season in Boulder.

There hasn't been a new Colorado commit since Nov. 11. The most heralded prospect in the class appears to be Mister Jones, a 6-foot-2, 205-pounder from Littleton, Colo. The Buffaloes lost their

first verbal commit for the class of 2010 in Littleton, Colo., Columbine star Danny Spond. The 4-star prospect cited CU's season as the reason to look around again.

And this brings us full circle.

Nebraska is leading the Big 12 North in recruiting, according to Rivals.com and to this writer.

There seems to be completeness in terms of playmakers on the defensive side of the ball. Six prospects are listed as defensive lineman, and most will start at either defensive end or defensive tackle. Four-star junior college tight end Chase Harper should help the Huskers spread the ball around even more.

At this point, they have locked up the top prospect in the state, U.S. Army All-American Andrew Rodriguez, who figures to come in and add depth to the offensive line. Surprise commit Quincy Enunwa went from unknown to a likely Top 100 prospect in California. Defensive end Donovan Vestal has been a force for his Arlington, Texas, Bowie team in the playoffs. He could find himself on either side of the ball as a lineman.

There are still high-profile targets left on the board, including 4-star safety Corey Cooper and top California wideout Austin Hill, for the three or four remaining spots that may be out there. So the Huskers have a chance to distance themselves from the rest of the division come signing day. **N**

Volleyball

BY BOB HAMAR

Huskers reload with local talent

Nebraska coach John Cook was impressed with the talent at his volleyball camp this past summer.

"Our top court is really strong," Cook said in June. "We're really happy about that. There are

some great young kids coming up in the state. We're excited about watching the kids develop and hopefully get to the level where they can play at Nebraska."

Cook has already gotten verbal commitments from three of those young players. Omaha Marian sophomore setter Lauren Sieckmann will join the program in 2012, while Papillion-LaVista south twins Kadie and Amber Rolfzen will come on board the following year.

Cook can't comment about future recruits until they sign, but he can hardly contain his excitement when talking about young players in the state.

"Two or three years from now you're going to see some great Nebraska kids," Cook said. "You can already see it building."

You can also see the Huskers building for a run at another national title in the near future. Cook added two players to the program in November when Morgan Broekhuis, a 6-foot-5 setter-hitter from Colorado Springs, Colo., and Kristen Kelsay, a setter from Wheaton, Ill., signed letters of intent to play at Nebraska next



season.

He later got a verbal commitment from Taylor Simpson, a 6-3 outside hitter from Colorado Springs, Colo., early in December. Simpson, a junior, is the first commit for the 2011 recruiting class.

But first things first. Cook can't wait to get Broekhuis and Kelsay into his program.

"Adding those two kids are going to be huge additions to this team. But I know what we're building towards, and we're starting to see how good this team can become," Cook said. "We're really excited. I love the personality of our team. It's a great group right now. Morgan will fit right in."

Broekhuis was considered the second-best senior volleyball player this season by Volleyball.com, but as far as Cook is considered she was the top player in the class. He expects Broekhuis to step right into a starting spot next season, but he's just not quite sure right now which spot that will be.

"Morgan can set," Cook said. "Obviously, I don't anticipate her setting her first year. We're going to look at her more as an attacker and potentially playing all the way around and that will depend on if she's able to hit out of the back row.

"She's the next player in line besides (Sarah) Pavan who could be good enough out of the back row to warrant playing all the way around, and she plays good enough defense. So we're really excited about her."

Cook said he'll figure out how to use Broekhuis when she gets to Lincoln. That will begin when she enrolls and joins the Husker volleyball program in January.

"When a Morgan comes along you just want to get her in the program and then you build a system to figure out how you're going to use her when she gets here because she can do so many things," Cook said.

Being left-handed certainly doesn't hurt

Broekhuis' chances of playing right away. Cook loves left-handed hitters playing on the right side because they have a better angle for attacks than right-handed players.

Pavan was a lefty, as is current Husker Lindsey Licht.

"I think in the sport of volleyball, having players who are really good in all the skills is just getting harder and harder," Cook said. "If you can find one that's 6-5, left-handed and do everything really well, those are rare, rare recruits, especially for a program like Nebraska, just being geographically located."

Cook said Broekhuis and Kelsay will fit in well with last year's recruiting class of outside hitters Hannah Werth and Gina Mancuso, both of whom are playing regularly this season, defensive specialist Megan Pendergast and middle blocker Hayley Thramer, who is redshirting.

"The classes are different," Cook said. "The one similarity is they're all similar type kids. They're all really good students. They've done really well leading up to their college experience and they're just great kids. They work hard. They're coming here for all the right reasons. They're going to bleed Huskers.

"Our players tend to attract similar kind of recruits, so our players had a big impact on Morgan and Kristen in the recruiting process."

FRESHMEN PERFORM

The Nebraska freshmen grew up in a hurry in the first two rounds of the NCAA Tournament. Things didn't go so well in the NCAA Tournament opener against Coastal Carolina, but Werth (13 kills, 14 digs, .476 hitting efficiency) and Mancuso (three kills from the back row, two ace serves) bounced back strong in the second round in a win over Northern Iowa.

"I was really pleased with Hannah and Gina for their second NCAA match," Cook said. "(The first night) I thought it was a little rough around the edges, but they came

back and finished off the night. Hannah put up some impressive numbers, but what is most impressive is she had a double-double and four blocks. That was a really great effort by her with some great numbers."

BIG SHOWING BY BIG 12

The Big 12 Conference showed its strength in the first two rounds of the NCAA Tournament. Four teams -- Nebraska, Texas, Texas A&M and Iowa State -- advanced to the Omaha Regional while Baylor downed UCLA on the Bruins' home court to move on to the Minneapolis Regional.

Nebraska certainly had its trouble with those teams. Texas beat the Huskers twice while Iowa State and Texas A&M each split two matches against Nebraska. **N**

2009 VOLLEYBALL SCHEDULE

Aug. 22	Red/White Scrimmage, 7 p.m.
Aug. 28-29	Runza/AVCA Showcase
Aug. 28	*vs. Michigan, L, 3-0
Aug. 29	*vs. Minnesota, W, 3-2
Sept. 1	Creighton, W, 3-0
Sept. 4-5	at LSU Tournament
Sept. 4	vs. UL-Lafayette, W, 3-0
	at LSU, W, 3-2
Sept. 5	vs. Tulane, W, 3-0
Sept. 10-13	Ameritas Players Challenge
Sept. 10	Virginia, W, 3-0
Sept. 11	BYU, W, 3-1
Sept. 13	^UCLA, L, 3-2
Sept. 16	Texas Tech, W, 3-0
Sept. 19	at Colorado, W, 3-0
Sept. 23	at Texas A&M, L, 3-2
Sept. 30	at Oklahoma, W, 3-0
Oct. 7	Kansas, W, 3-0
Oct. 10	Kansas State, W, 3-0
Oct. 14	at Baylor, W, 3-0
Oct. 17	at Missouri, W, 3-1
Oct. 21	Iowa State, L, 3-2
Oct. 24	Oklahoma, W, 3-1
Oct. 28	at Texas Tech, W, 3-0
Oct. 30	at Texas, L, 3-0
Nov. 4	Missouri, W, 3-0
Nov. 7	at Iowa State, W, 3-0
Nov. 13	Texas A&M, W, 3-0
Nov. 18	Baylor, W, 3-0
Nov. 21	at Kansas, W, 3-0
Nov. 25	at Kansas State, W, 3-0
Nov. 28	Colorado, W, 3-0
Dec. 4	*Coastal Carolina, W, 3-0
Dec. 5	*Northern Iowa, W, 3-0
Dec. 11	*Iowa State, 7 p.m.
Dec. 12	NCAA Regional Finals
Dec. 17	NCAA Semifinals, Finals

*NCAA Tournament, ^ at Bob Devaney Sports Center

Men's Basketball

QUINCY HANKINS-COLE

BY BRIAN ROSENTHAL

Hankins-Cole learning to adjust to a new game

An early-December snowstorm in Lincoln served as a jolting reminder to Quincy Hankins-Cole that he's no longer in Florida.

Never mind that Hankins-Cole is a New York native who's seen plenty of snow in his lifetime.

"But two years away from it," he said, "it just hits you like, 'Oh, wow, I'm back in a cold area now.'"

Hankins-Cole spent the last two years playing basketball at Polk Community College in Florida. Now that he's playing for Nebraska, Hankins-Cole has had eye-opening experiences more significant than the Midwestern winter.

A 6-foot-8, 230-pound forward, Hankins-Cole says he's still adjusting to the speed of the Division I level of basketball.

"It's totally different," he said. "I had to get used to making cuts faster, getting to places quicker, and stuff like that."

Oh, and another thing: Hankins-Cole has realized that being 6-8 for a Big 12 Conference team isn't the same as being 6-8 in junior college.

"I didn't realize it until I actually got here," he said. "I'm like, 'I feel like a little short guy now.'"

Combine those realizations with the fact Hankins-Cole needed to improve his conditioning level and shed a few pounds, and



it's easy to understand why he hasn't yet been the same dominating force on the boards he was in junior college.

When Hankins-Cole says coaches tell players to "make one thing better about yourself today in practice," he doesn't have to think long to determine what his one thing is.

"Rebounding," Hankins-Cole said. "I'm having a little bit of a struggle in that area so far."

Through the early portion of Nebraska's non-conference schedule, none of the Huskers' new big men – freshmen Jorge Brian-Diaz and Brandon Ubel included – had exerted themselves on the boards.

Hankins-Cole, who came to Nebraska with a reputation for rebounding, is eager to change that.

At Polk Community College, Hankins-Cole averaged 12.3 rebounds per game last season. He averaged 8.3 rebounds as a *freshman*. But there, he said, rebounding was easier.

"Yeah, pretty much, because I was kind of taller than a lot of people. Now I'm short," Hankins-Cole said, smiling.

"Rebounding here is a little different because everybody can jump now. It's like a different kind of level. You've just got to get in the weight room, get your legs stronger, so you can get up, go get it."

Nebraska coach Doc Sadler said he'd seen an increase in Hankins-Cole's effort level in practices after the Huskers' first four games.

"Up until that time I had been disappointed because it's about effort," Sadler said. "He's a very talented kid, but again, it takes junior college players a little longer. But I think he's finally got it. At least he's shown that (lately) and it's only going to make us better."

Hankins-Cole, who played at Roosevelt High School in Roosevelt, N.Y., was only 16 when he graduated high school and headed to Polk Community College. There, he played with current Husker teammate Lance Jeter. In helping the

Vikings to a 26-6 record last season, Hankins-Cole averaged 15.8 points and shot a team-best 53 percent from the floor.

Since arriving in Lincoln, Hankins-Cole has dropped 12 pounds.

"I just ran extra after practice, on the weekends," he said. "Just do a little bit extra."

Now, Hankins-Cole aims to do a little more to help a young Nebraska frontcourt as it prepares for Big 12 Conference play.

"We just need to be more aggressive on both offense and defense in the post," he said. "That comes along in practice. Just have to work on it in practice every day."

"We've just got to get everybody to play our game. If we control the game, control the ball and time of possession, like Coach Doc says, we'll have a better chance to win."

ROAD WARRIORS

Three of Nebraska's first seven regular-season basketball games were road games. And not neutral-site games, either – true road games.

Two of those games were in November, marking the first time since 1989 that the Huskers played two true road games before December.

Probably not the ideal schedule for a team with eight scholarship newcomers, but a learning lesson nonetheless.

Nebraska lost at Saint Louis by 14 points, but regrouped and knocked off USC in Los Angeles when Eshaunte Jones hit a 3-pointer with 11 seconds remaining for a 51-48 victory.

But the Huskers' inexperience showed again the next time they hit the road – at in-state rival Creighton. Nebraska committed 20 turnovers – 14 unforced – in a 67-61 loss at Qwest Center Omaha.

Nebraska rallied from deficits of 10 points in the first half and eight points in the second half but couldn't overcome Creighton's 26-of-32 free-throw shooting.

"If you would've told me (before the game) that we'd be in it at the end

committing 20 turnovers and them shooting 18 more free throws, I would've told you that you're nuts," Sadler said. "I have no idea how we stayed in the game. We should've gotten blown out. It should've been a 25-point ball game."

ANDERSON CLIMBING CHART

Senior guard Ryan Anderson had four steals in Nebraska's 81-53 victory over Texas Pan-American on Dec. 9 to move into the school's career Top 10 for steals.

Anderson moved past Eric Johnson and Jack Moore, who were tied for ninth place on the all-time steals list with 128. With one steal at Creighton, Anderson tied Jaron Boone with 131 career steals, good for eighth all-time at Nebraska. **N**

2009 MEN'S BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

Nov. 6	Arkansas-Fort Smith (exh.), W, 86-66
Nov. 10	Hastings (exh.), W, 71-39
Nov. 14	South Carolina Upstate, W, 76-49
Nov. 18	at Saint Louis, L, 69-55
Nov. 21	TCU, W, 90-77
Nov. 24	UMKC, W, 70-48
Nov. 29	at USC, W, 51-48
Dec. 2	Texas-Pan American, W, 81-53
Dec. 6	at Creighton, L, 67-61
Dec. 10	Chicago State, W, 74-39
Dec. 12	Oregon State, TBD
Dec. 19	Jackson State, 7 p.m. at Las Vegas Classic
Dec. 22	vs. Tulsa, 7 p.m.
Dec. 23	vs. BYU or Nevada, 7 or 9:30 p.m.
Dec. 29	Southern Utah, 7 p.m.
Jan. 2	Maryland Eastern Shore, TBD
Jan. 5	Southeastern Louisiana, 7 p.m.
Jan. 9	at Texas A&M, 3 p.m., Big 12 Network
Jan. 13	Kansas, 8 p.m., ESPN2
Jan. 16	Iowa State, TBD
Jan. 23	at Missouri, 5 p.m., Big 12 Network
Jan. 27	at Colorado, TBD
Jan. 30	Oklahoma, 12:30 p.m., Big 12 Network
Feb. 2	Kansas State, 7 p.m., Big 12 Network
Feb. 6	at Kansas, 5 p.m., ESPN2
Feb. 10	Baylor, 8 p.m., ESPN2
Feb. 13	at Texas, 3 p.m., Big 12 Network
Feb. 17	at Kansas State, TBD
Feb. 20	Missouri, 5 p.m., Big 12 Network
Feb. 24	at Iowa State, TBD
Feb. 27	Texas Tech, 3 p.m., Big 12 Network
Mar. 2	Colorado, TBD
Mar. 6	at Okla. St., 12:30 p.m., Big 12 Network at Big 12 Championship
Mar. 10-13	at Kansas City, Mo. (Sprint Center)

Women's Basketball

KELSEY GRIFFIN

BY CURT MCKEEVER

Griffin making big returns on offense and defense



This is Connie Yori on Nov. 22, after her Nebraska women's basketball team's 107-54 pasting of Washington State: "Washington State is a good team and they're going to win a lot of games. They caught us on a night where we played really well."

Here's Yori on Dec. 5 after the Huskers went on the road to knock Miami from the unbeaten ranks: "Miami has some firepower and they are going to win some games in the ACC this year. But we were just a little bit better today because we played hard, we played together and we played as a team."

Are you seeing the pattern?

Indeed, Yori, who has stated from the start of practice how much she enjoys coaching her eighth Nebraska team, has a cast that can make quality opposition look ordinary, or worse.

And people are definitely noticing.

Following their win at Miami that left them with an 8-0 start (one off their all-time best), the Huskers cracked The Associated Press Top 25 poll at No. 24. It was their first appearance in the poll since mid-February of 2007.

"We still have things to work on," said senior forward Kelsey Griffin, who wasn't about to get carried away by the recognition.

Of course, it's the 6-foot-2, senior forward – a two-time first-team All-Big 12 player – who has given Nebraska an extra zip after missing last season with an ankle injury.

Though NU lacked nothing in the hustle department last season while scrapping its way to a WNIT invitation, it desperately could have used Griffin's career averages of 14.8 points and 7.3 rebounds, as well as her leadership.

But it would be inaccurate to say the Eagle River, Alaska, product is the only reason Yori believes her team will be a legitimate contender for the Big 12 championship.

Forward Cory Montgomery and guards Dominique Kelley and Vonnice Turner started all 31 games last season, while forward Catheryn Redmon made 24 starts.

This year, the competition for playing time has been intense enough that for the first three games Kala Kuhlmann got the nod over Turner, who'd made 64 consecutive starts.

Now, throw into the mix freshman point guard Lindsey Moore, a Parade All-American from Covington, Wash., and you can start to understand why Nebraska ran off seven lopsided victories before being pushed at Miami.

Not surprisingly, the Huskers' up-tempo style has led to a lot of easy baskets and some eye-popping defensive numbers – such as holding their first eight opponents to 36.1 percent shooting and forcing an average of 22 turnovers.

"Defensively, we've made some strides," Yori said in early December, on the day before her club held South Dakota to 38 points. "We're just a better defensive team than we were a month ago and, frankly, maybe than at any point last year.

"We've focused on simplifying and saying this is what we're going to do, and do it well. Also, we've got better personnel. The combination of that and better depth helps us play better full-court defense, and then having more versatility has helped."

And though Griffin's presence might be more noticeable on offense, it's not like she's taking a break when the Huskers don't have the ball.

"I've heard people get excited about the offensive end because we have Kelsey back. Well, Kelsey gives us something on

the defensive end that most people don't recognize. She's versatile. She can guard on the perimeter," Yori said. "People try to create a mismatch, but now we're able to switch more screens."

And then there's Turner.

The senior from Bellevue, Neb., has been selected to the Big 12's all-defensive team the last two seasons, primarily for her hounding of opposing point guards.

But through eight games, Turner was ahead of the school-record pace for most 3-point baskets in one season, and her average of three per game was better than the Nebraska record set by Amy Stephens 21 years ago.

"I'm a senior and Coach has told me she expects more from me on defense and offense," Turner said. "I work on my 3's almost every day. ... I want to try and be an all-around player this year."

In the win against South Dakota, Nebraska used a 35-6, first-half run to overcome a three-point deficit nearly 8 minutes into the game.

Turner sparked the flurry by hitting 3-pointers on three straight possessions, and later in the half hit another, drew a foul and sank a free throw to complete a four-point play.

"I think a couple of things have gotten her off to a good start," Yori said of Turner's outside shooting. "No. 1, she's healthy and doesn't have a shoulder that every other week she's throwing out and has to deal with it for four or five days (like last season). Secondly, she's getting more open shots, because she's not playing point guard as much."

That's because of the addition of Moore, who led her high school team to a state title in Washington's largest class and No. 2 national ranking by USA Today.

Moore wasted no time proving she had what it takes to grab hold of a team that has five seniors and four juniors, as in the opener against Davidson she had eight assists while playing barely half the game.

Her seven dishes in the first half represented the single-game high by a Husker last season.

"Lindsey's got tremendous floor vision," Yori said. "She sees things most freshmen don't see, in fact, most upperclassmen don't see. She's going to be special from that standpoint."

Notice another pattern here?

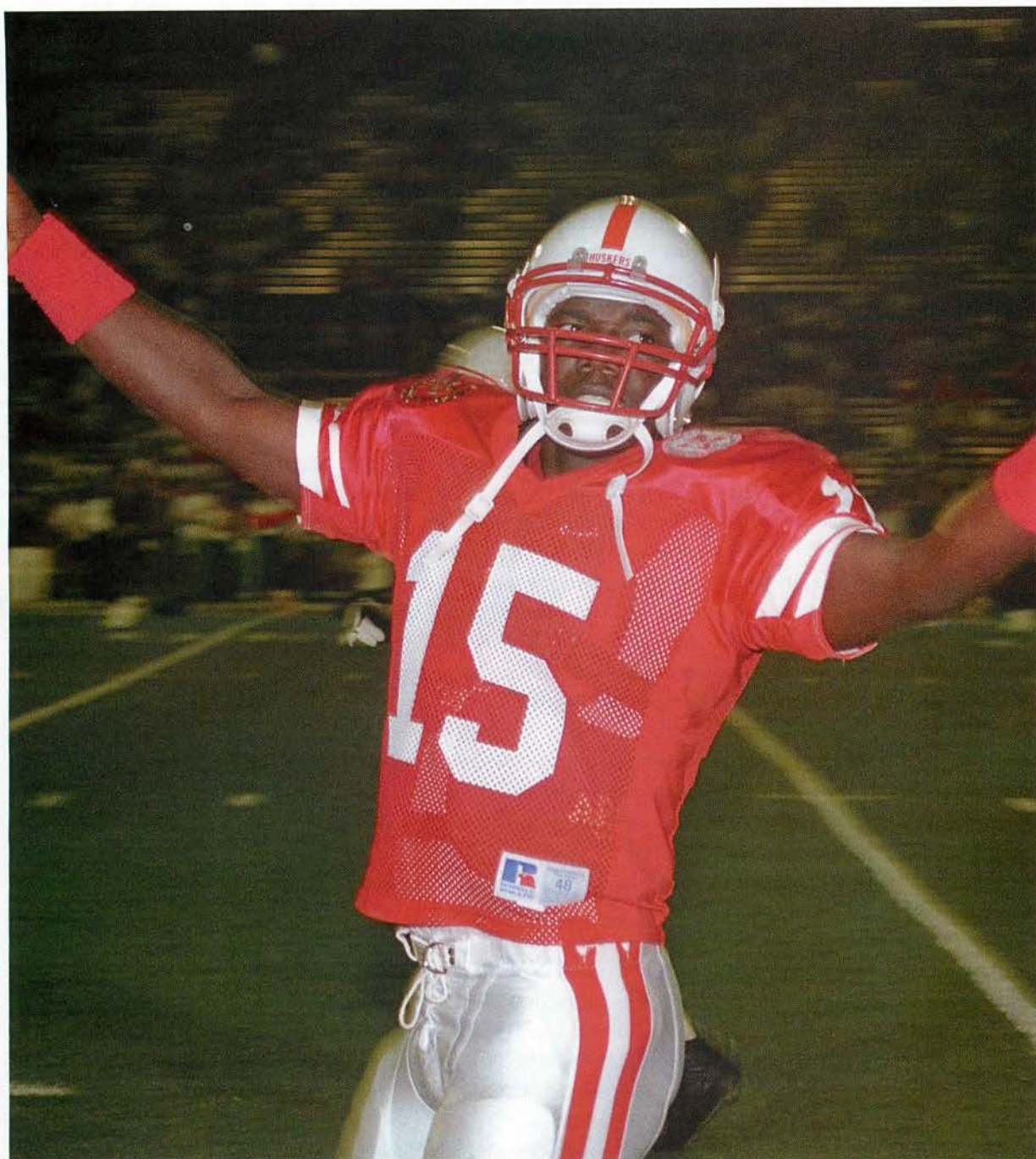
That's right – Yori's become pretty generous with the compliments.

Given her demanding nature, that should tell you a lot about how good she thinks this group can be.

If you need another clue, here's her reaction to the close call at Miami, where Nebraska showed the effects of being on the road and playing less than 48 hours after facing South Dakota: "It's a great win for us, no doubt about it. Here's a team that's undefeated, had a whole week to prepare for us. We had to be the tougher team. We did that. (We) didn't back down." **N**

2009 WOMEN'S BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

Nov. 3	Pittsburg State (exh), W, 68-54
Nov. 8	Nebraska-Kearney (exh), W, 89-47
Nov. 13	Davidson, W, 86-62
Nov. 15	at UNLV, W, 73-51
Nov. 19	Idaho State, W, 88-41
Nov. 22	Washington State, W, 107-54 <i>Saint Mary's Hilton Tournament</i>
Nov. 27	UALR, at Moraga, Calif., W, 62-45
Nov. 28	at Saint Mary's College, W, 84-73
Dec. 3	South Dakota, W, 77-38
Dec. 5	Miami, at Coral Gables, Fla., W, 76-71
Dec. 9	Creighton, W, 69-56
Dec. 13	Northern Illinois, 2:05 p.m.
Dec. 20	LSU, 1:05 p.m.
Dec. 30	Albany, 7:05 p.m.
Jan. 4	at Vermont, TBA
Jan. 9	at Iowa State, TBA
Jan. 12	Texas, 7:05 p.m.
Jan. 16	at Baylor, TBA
Jan. 23	Kansas State, TBA
Jan. 27	at Texas Tech, 7 p.m.
Jan. 30	at Colorado, TBA
Feb. 3	Oklahoma State, 7:05 p.m.
Feb. 6	Texas A&M, TBA
Feb. 10	at Kansas, 7 p.m.
Feb. 13	at Missouri, TBA
Feb. 17	Iowa State, 7:05 p.m.
Feb. 20	Colorado, TBA
Feb. 24	at Oklahoma, 7 p.m.
Feb. 27	Missouri, TBA
Mar. 3	Kansas, 7:05 p.m.
Mar. 6	at Kansas State, TBA
Mar 11-14	at Big 12 Championships
Mar 20-23	NCAA First & Second Rounds
Mar 27-30	NCAA Regionals
Apr 4-6	NCAA Women's Final Four at San Antonio, Texas (Alamodome)



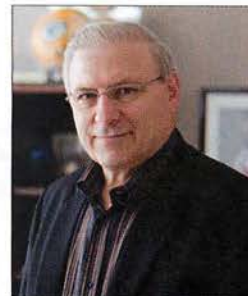
A PERFORMANCE UNDER PRESSURE — Tommie Frazier, 33-3 as a starter at Nebraska, was at his best in big games. He was selected as the Cornhuskers' most valuable player in his final three bowl games, all with a national championship on the line. In the 1994 Orange Bowl loss (18-16) against Florida State, he matched Charlie Ward, the Seminoles' Heisman Trophy-winning quarterback, yard for yard; both

finished with 283 yards of total offense. In the 1995 Orange Bowl against Miami, Frazier started, played the first quarter, was replaced by Brook Berringer and then returned in the fourth quarter to lead the Huskers to victory (24-17). And in the 1996 Fiesta Bowl victory (62-24) against Florida, he rushed for 199 yards and two touchdowns. The 199 rushing yards were an NCAA record for a quarterback in a bowl game.



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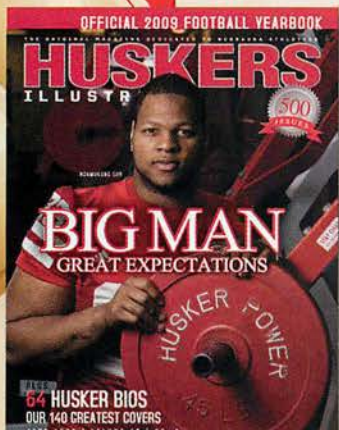


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ARIZONA 23, NEBRASKA 20

DEC. 30, 1998 • AT SAN DIEGO, CALIF.



With 10:55 remaining, Nebraska took a 20-16 lead against the Wildcats. Redshirted freshman quarterback **ERIC CROUCH** directed the eight-play, 88-yard touchdown drive.

However, No. 5-ranked Arizona responded with a touchdown drive of its own, covering 68 yards on nine plays, including eight consecutive runs, to avoid the upset.

Nebraska held the Wildcats, who had averaged 444.9 yards per game in an 11-1 regular season, to 265 total yards. But 102 of those yards came during the decisive fourth quarter.

Arizona's defense was similarly effective. The Cornhuskers ranked sixth nationally in rushing, averaging 253.8 yards per game on the ground, but managed only 87 yards on 34 attempts. Crouch, who started for the sixth time, was Nebraska's leading rusher – 28 yards on 15 carries.

Cornhusker rush end **MIKE RUCKER** was the defensive MVP. He was credited with seven tackles, including six unassisted and five for losses, and two quarterback hurries.

Safety **MIKE BROWN** led Nebraska with 13 tackles.

Both teams had turnover problems. Nebraska lost two fumbles, and two Crouch passes were intercepted, both by safety **CHRIS MCALISTER**, while Arizona lost three-of-four fumbles.

McAlister also recovered a fumble, blocked a **KRIS BROWN** field goal attempt and returned a punt 75 yards for what would have been a touchdown if not for a clipping penalty on the Wildcats.

Arizona 23, Nebraska 20

Nebraska	0	13	0	7	–	20
Arizona	6	3	0	23	–	23

- (A) Mark McDonald 38 field goal
- (A) McDonald 25 field goal
- (A) McDonald 48 field goal
- (N) Kris Brown 25 field goal
- (N) Shevin Wiggins 45 pass Eric Crouch (Brown kick)
- (N) Brown 23 field goal
- (A) Brad Brennen 15 pass Keith Smith (McDonald kick)
- (N) Tracey Wistrom 4 pass Crouch (Brown kick)
- (A) Kelvin Eafon 1 run (McDonald kick)

Attendance: 65,354

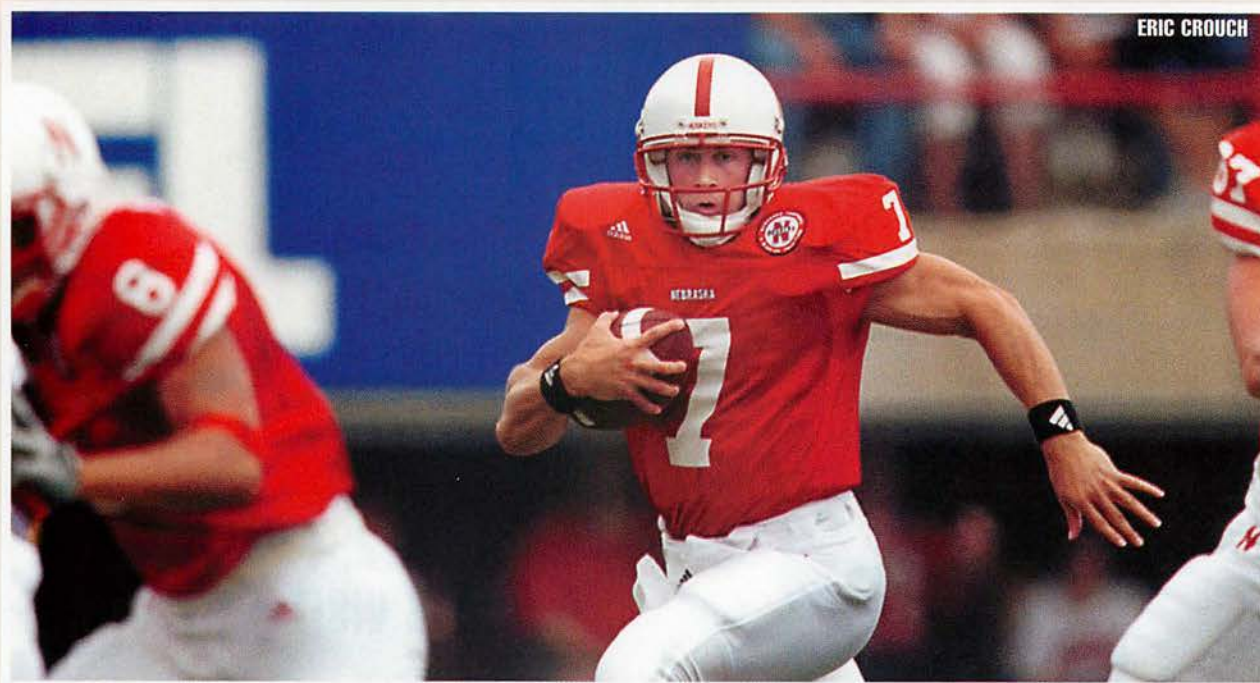
FRANK SOLICH: "I was worried about our defense running out of gas early in the game because we put them back on the field so quickly with the turnovers. It seemed like they were on the field forever. We could have been down by a number of points, but they played tremendously well."

DO YOU REMEMBER?

► Sophomore **BOBBY NEWCOMBE**, who began the season as the Huskers' starting quarterback, stayed home in Albuquerque, N.M., recovering from knee surgery.

► Sophomore I-back **DEANGELO EVANS**, who carried four times for a net of 0 yards, was hampered by injury throughout the season and played in only three games prior to the bowl. "When I am healthy, I am as good as anybody. Anybody. **RICKY WILLIAMS**. Anybody," Evans told the Lincoln Journal Star. Williams was the Heisman Trophy winner that season.

► All 70,500 tickets for the game were sold, and the official attendance of 65,354 was a Holiday Bowl record.



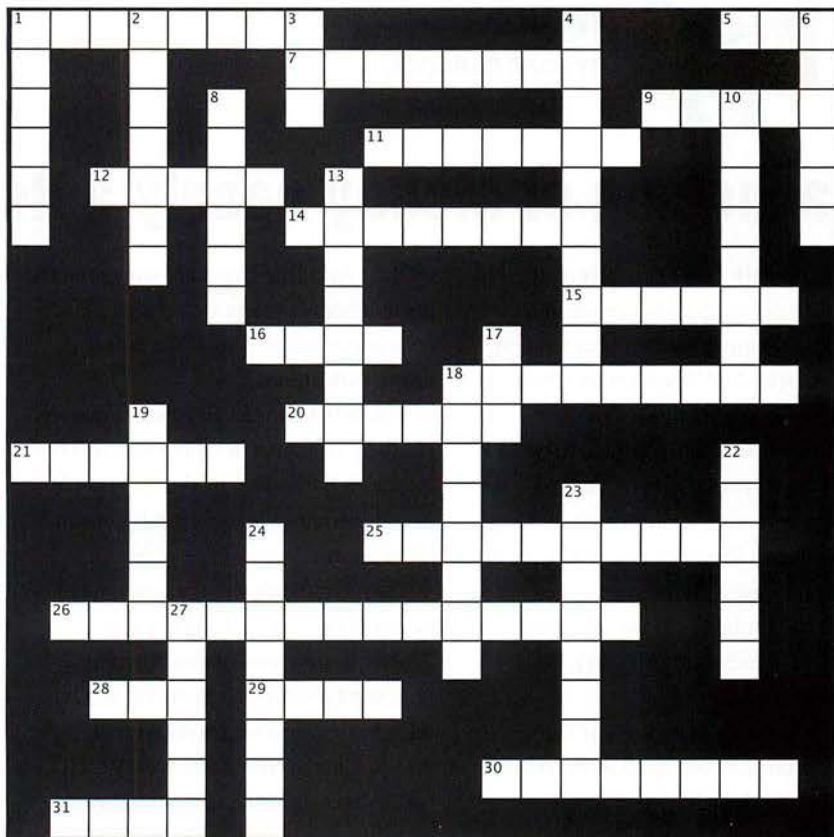
CROSSWORD & TRIVIA

ACROSS

1. Arizona school color
5. Leading tackler vs. Texas
7. Holiday Bowl city
9. Ex-Husker kicker now with Houston Texans
11. NU opponent in previous Holiday Bowl appearance
12. NU's bowl game after 2008 season
14. Arizona's bowl game after 2008 season
15. Last team to beat Arizona in 2009
16. Running backs coach
18. Day of the week for Holiday Bowl
20. Leading receiver vs. Texas
21. Wears No. 46
25. Ex-Husker running back now with Denver Broncos
26. Opponent in 2010 opener
28. Team Arizona defeated in previous game
29. Leading rusher vs. Texas
30. 1971 Outland Trophy winner
31. Network for Holiday Bowl telecast

DOWN

1. Leading receiver vs. Colorado
2. Leading tackler vs. Colorado
3. Bo Pelini's former school
4. Bo Pelini's hometown
6. Arizona College Football Hall of Fame inductee
8. 1972 Outland Trophy winner
10. Arizona head coach's former school
13. Defensive ends coach
17. Had longest run vs. Texas
18. Arizona nickname
19. Arizona head coach
22. Arizona offensive alignment
23. Former Arizona head coach
24. Leading rusher vs. Colorado
27. Arizona campus location



Answers will appear in the February issue

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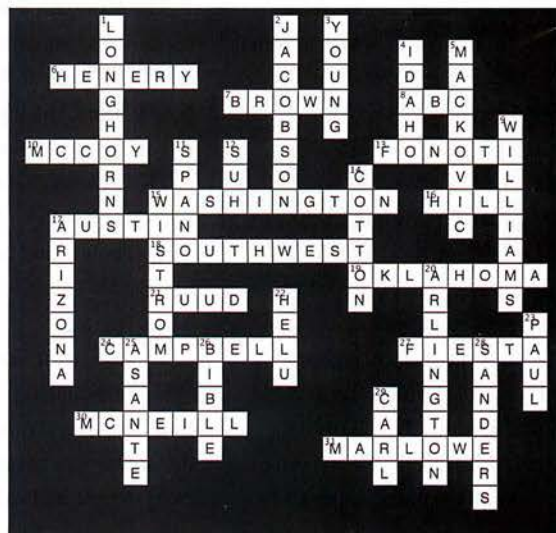
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DECEMBER CROSSWORD SOLUTION





THE FINAL WORD

BY MIKE BABCOCK

Launching of McCoy nearly a Heisman moment

EARLY IN THE THIRD quarter of the Big 12 Championship game, on second-and-23, Ndamukong Suh beat a double-team block, shed Texas center Chris Hall and sacked Colt McCoy.

Suh grabbed the 6-foot-2, 210-pound McCoy and tossed him to the turf – as if the Longhorns' quarterback and Big 12 Offensive Player of the Year were a ragdoll, to use a cliché.

"I thought he (Suh) was definitely going to launch him (McCoy)," said Jared Crick.

Suh did some launching of ball carriers this season, none more violent than a launch of Baylor quarterback Nick Florence. Actually, it was more of a slam than a launch.

The play drew a questionable penalty because of the violence. Penalty or not, however, it was the most remarkable play Crick has seen Suh make this season.

He "heard the thud, and kind of felt bad for the kid (Florence)," Crick said. "At the same time, it was kind of a shock he (Suh) actually did that . . . it just showed his strength."

Crick expected a replay when Suh grabbed McCoy. "I was expecting him (Suh) to give him (McCoy) the slammer, too. But he kind of let him (McCoy) off easy," said Crick.

The play involved two-of-five finalists for the Heisman Trophy. Had Suh won the award as college football's most outstanding player, the play could have been a Heisman moment.

Johnny Rodgers' Heisman moment, a year early, was his punt return against Oklahoma in the "Game of the Century." Mike Rozier's Heisman moment might have been a reverse-field-and-give-ground touchdown run against

UCLA. And Eric Crouch's was probably his touchdown reception on a wingback-reverse pass thrown by Mike Stuntz against Oklahoma.

Suh didn't win the Heisman, however. He finished fourth in voting that was the closest in the history of the 75-year-old award, perhaps the most prestigious in all of sports.

That Suh didn't win it doesn't mean he didn't deserve it. The Heisman Trophy is an offensive award, not in philosophy but certainly in reality. Only once has a defensive player won the award, Charles Woodson, in 1997. He was a defensive back who also played wide receiver and returned kicks.

No defensive interior lineman has ever won the award. And only three have finished in the top five since 1964, when NCAA rules allowed for the return of two-platoon play.

Penn State defensive tackle Mike Reid finished fifth in 1969. Nebraska middle guard Rich Glover finished third in 1972. And Washington defensive tackle Steve Emtman finished fourth in 1991.

The Heisman Trophy depicts a ball carrier. The model was Warren Mulrey, a running back at Fordham whose coach, Jim Crowley, a member of Notre Dame's famed Four Horsemen.

This year's other finalists included two quarterbacks – McCoy and Florida's Tim Tebow – and two running backs – Stanford's Toby Gerhart and Alabama's Mark Ingram.

The Heisman Trophy's official Website included photos of the finalists. Suh, who has scored three touchdowns during his Cornhusker career, was carrying the ball in his photo.

Ingram won the award, the first

Alabama player ever to do so. He was followed by Gerhart and McCoy. Only 28 points separated the first two, with McCoy only 159 points behind Ingram.

Heisman Trophy or not, Suh (815 points) has represented the program well, collecting more major national awards in one season than any Cornhusker defender before him.

And he has accepted those awards in the right way.

"One thing that Suh says is it's not just about him; it's about the guys around him," Bo Pelini said the morning of the Heisman announcement.

"There's no way he plays the way he did if he didn't have guys around him, helping him do that . . . it's a team award."

"He's kind of the face (of the program) right now, but believe me, he's fully aware, as is everybody, that those other 10 guys who were playing around him had a lot to say in what happened, too, and it's good to see he's acknowledging that. He's a very humble guy, and I'm happy for him."

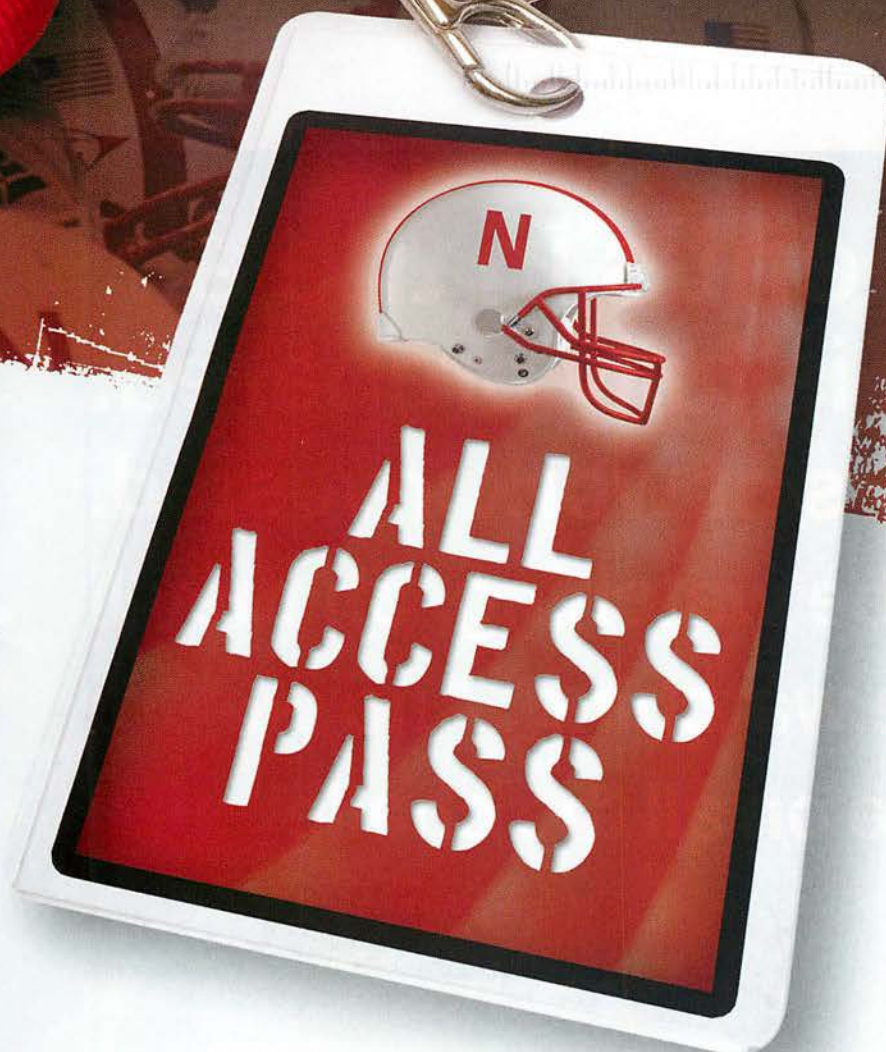
After the Big 12 Championship game, defensive coordinator and Suh's position coach, Carl Pelini, said: "If Suh didn't win the Heisman tonight, it's a disgrace."

"He's the best player in college football."

During his career, "he's done phenomenal things that you wouldn't see any other athlete do in their lifetime, which is very, very cool, definitely amazing to see," said Crick.

Suh has certainly been the most outstanding at his position.

The problem is no one at that position has ever been voted the Heisman Trophy. **N**



YOU'RE IN.

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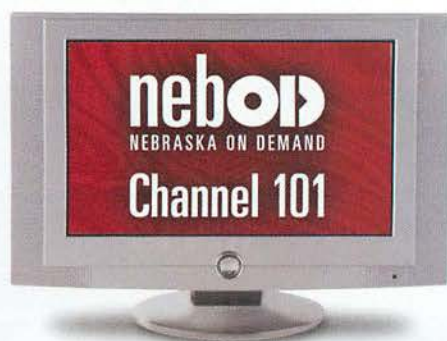
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2009 Nebraska Football Schedule

Date	Opponent	Location	Time/Results
Sat, Sep 05	Florida Atlantic	Memorial Stadium	W, 49-3
Sat, Sep 12	Arkansas State	Memorial Stadium	W, 38-9
Sat, Sep 19	at Virginia Tech	at Blacksburg, VA	L, 15-16
Sat, Sep 26	Louisiana-Lafayette	Memorial Stadium	W, 55-0
Thu, Oct 08	at Missouri *	at Columbia, MO	W, 27-12
Sat, Oct 17	Texas Tech *	Memorial Stadium	L, 10-31
Sat, Oct 24	Iowa State *	Memorial Stadium	L, 7-9
Sat, Oct 31	at Baylor *	at Waco, TX	W, 20-10
Sat, Nov 07	Oklahoma *	Memorial Stadium	W, 10-3
Sat, Nov 14	at Kansas *	at Lawrence, KS	W, 31-17
Sat, Nov 21	Kansas State *	Memorial Stadium	W, 17-3
Fri, Nov 27	at Colorado *	at Boulder, CO	W, 28-20
Sat, Dec 5	vs. Texas^	Arlington, TX	L, 12-13
Wed, Dec 30	vs. Arizona#	San Diego, CA	7 p.m., ESPN

* Conference games

^ Big 12 Championship Game

#Holiday Bowl



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